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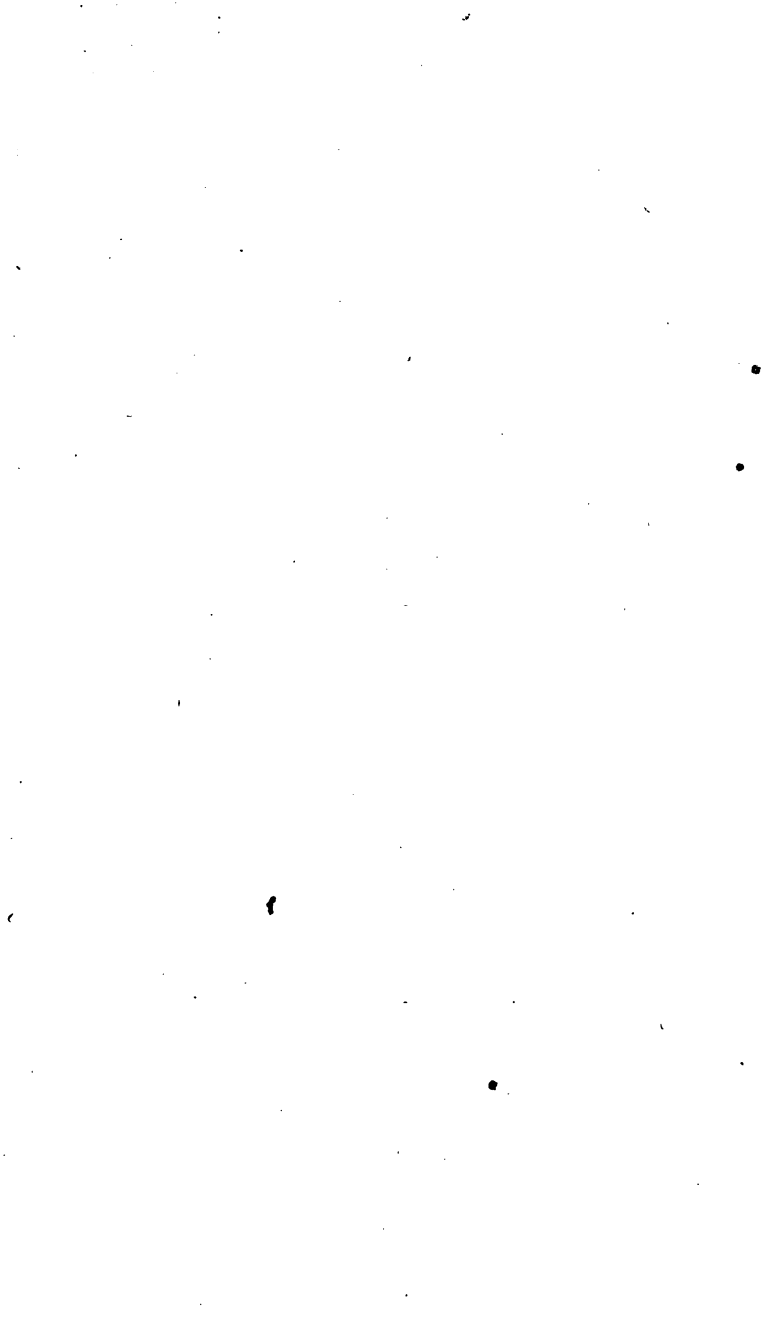
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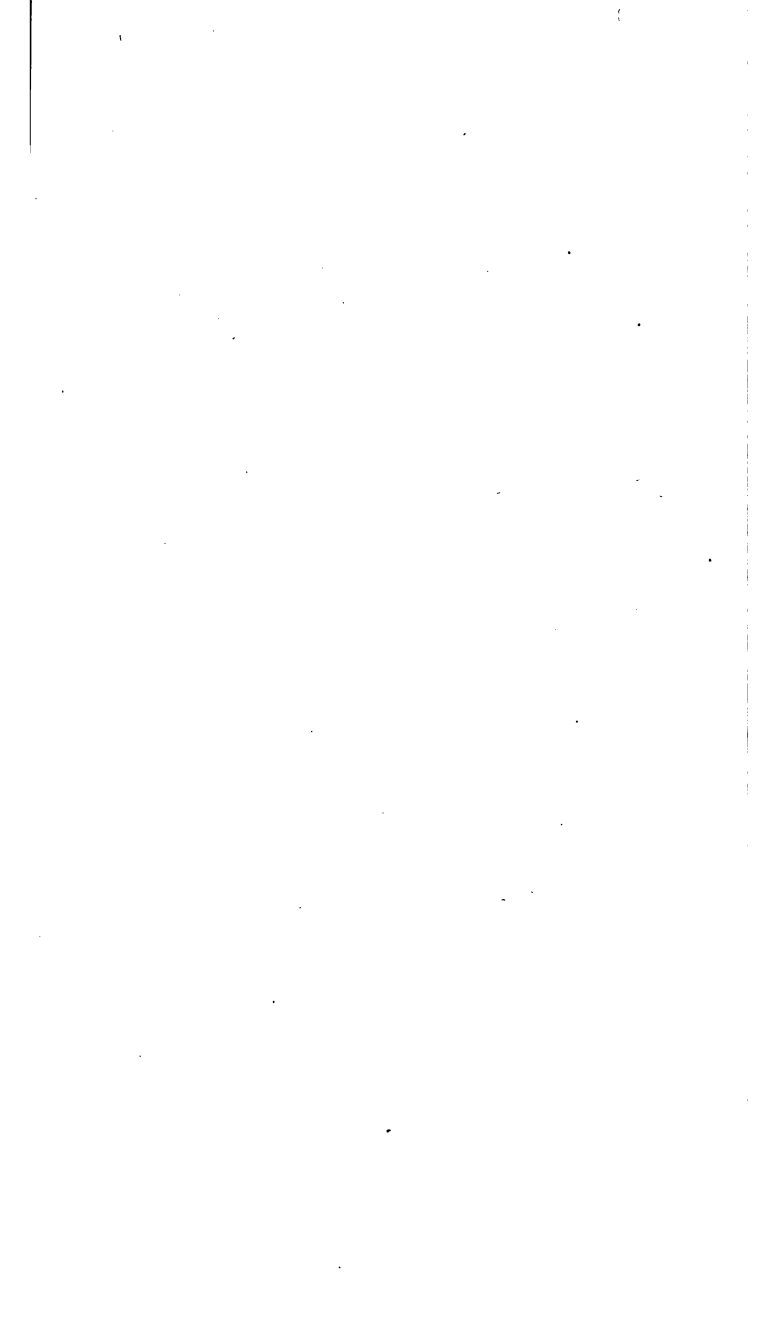
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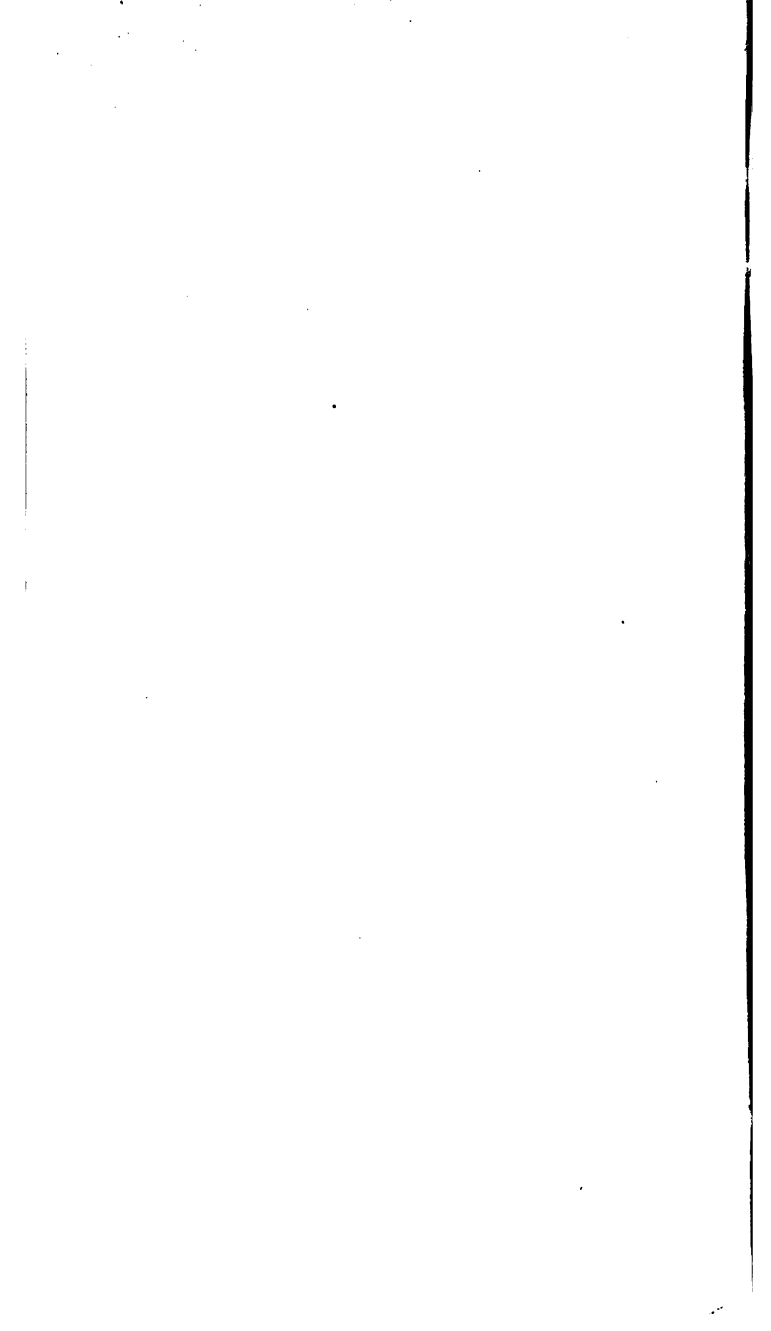
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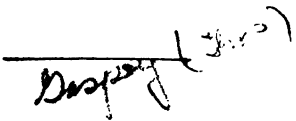
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**OTHER TIMES.**

**VOL. I.**

LONDON :  
Printed by A. & R. Spottiswoode,  
New-Street-Square.

Other Times;  
OR,  
THE MONKS OF LEADENHALL.

  
BY THE AUTHOR OF  
THE LOLLARDS;—THE MYSTERY;  
CALTHORPE, OR FALLEN FORTUNES;  
&c. &c.

---

All thynges in this boke that ye shall rede,  
Doe as ye lyst, there shall no manne you bynde,  
Them to beleue, as surely as your crede.  
But notwithstanding certes in my mynde,  
I durst well swere, as true ye shall them fynde.  
SIR THOMAS MORE.

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## PREFACE.

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THE writer who attempts a tale founded on the events, the opinions, or the manners of a remote period, has a task of some difficulty to perform in furnishing himself with those particulars, relating to the former state of society, which are necessary for his purpose. When successful industry has conquered this, he is in no small danger of offending by the very toil he has undergone. That which has cost much labour, men are reluctant to consider of no value; and authors too frequently inflict the result of their researches in a way which must compel acknowledgement, though not admiration, of their useless diligence.

The individual who is responsible for the following pages cannot determine whether or not he has thus offended ; but when he looks at the mass of illustrations which he has spared, he is almost afraid that he has fallen into an opposite error. What he has offered relative to old English habits, he has endeavoured to make correct. Such details, as well as the local pictures, are drawn from the most approved authorities. The documents quoted are what they profess to be, and have been accurately copied from the originals ; the scenery and decorations of the ancient mysteries are described, without exaggeration ; and the festivities of the day are given with a like regard for truth.

The principal characters are all imaginary, but many of the incidents will be recognised as having actually occurred at the date of the story, and those ac-

quainted with the chronicles of the times, will know that some of the most startling occurrences are deviations from romance into history.

Dreary vaults and under-ground passages, stand so far justified by precedent, that it would seem an affectation of mincing delicacy, to offer any excuse for putting them in requisition for "the Monks of Leadenhall." Those who know how vast a theatre for subterranean enterprise remains to this day, where the Monastery once stood, will perhaps admit that the author has availed himself of the facilities thus offered with moderation. If the depravity represented to exist where it ought least to have been expected, should seem overcharged, for proof that the reverse is the fact, he again refers to the Chronicles, to the Harleian Manuscripts, and the other records extant relative to monastic establishments, of too many of which, if



those be truths which the world has received as such, it might be said with justice, in the words of the old poet Walton,

In this place both early and late,  
Dame Lust, dame Wantonness, and dame Vyce,  
They were so there inhabited I wotte,  
That few taken heede to Goddy's service.

# OTHER TIMES ;

OR,

## THE MONKS OF LEADENHALL.

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### CHAPTER I.

They raised his body once a year; and the day on which this ceremony was performed, which was called the day of his translation, was a general holiday.

HUME.

**T**HREE travellers approached the entrance of Canterbury, as journeying from Dover, in the afternoon of a summer's day, when they found their advance opposed by an immense concourse of people. The crowd was so great that they could not go forward but with extreme difficulty ;

but as they insensibly made a little way, they soon found that to retreat would not be more easy than to continue their course.

Two of the persons thus circumstanced were men, the third a female. Her age, to judge from appearances, could not exceed sixteen. She was evidently fatigued, but in spite of this circumstance, and notwithstanding the hot sun to which she had been exposed had detracted somewhat from the delicacy of her countenance, it was still so rich in beauty that every eye rested on her, while, wondering at all around her, she was too much engrossed by the buildings which presented themselves to observation, and the novelty of the moving scene, to feel conscious that she had for a moment occupied the attention of any one besides her immediate companions.

Her costume, and that of one of the men who rode by her side, was Spanish. This person, who might pass for her brother

from the resemblance to be remarked, was about twenty-five years of age. His look was stern and thoughtful. The attention bestowed on the female by his side afforded him no gratification, and whenever they succeeded in advancing a single pace, his eyes, from surveying the throng which they were attempting to penetrate, were constantly turned to the lady, with an expression that at once indicated a desire to make those near him comprehend that she was under his care, and that he was resolute to guard his charge with vigilance, and to repel, with decisive energy, any attempted familiarity.

The third person of the party was English. His age could not be more than twenty-one. He rode on the left-hand of the lady, the person last described being on her right. Though not less attentive to his fair companion than his friend, there was nothing of that sternness about his features which marked

those of her other protector. On the contrary, an air of exultation could be traced, and a gay anxiety to mark the surprise, the pleasure, or the admiration afforded or excited by the singular spectacle which opened on the foreigners.

“ What think you of England now !” he exclaimed, when, from the increasing density of the multitude, they were obliged absolutely to stand still.

“ In sooth Edmund,” his male companion replied, “ I know not what to think of England as yet, but I have been amazed all the way we came to find its roads so replenished with men and women, for certainly I never saw a greater assemblage in all my life than that which I now behold.”

“ What,” inquired the lady, “ is the occasion of the meeting of the multitudes we now see ?”

“ I,” said Edmund, “ have been so much occupied in conversation with you and Ferdinand, that I forgot to refer to

the calendar before, and had somewhat neglected it on our voyage ; but what I now behold explains all, and I can at once comprehend the cause of this congregating at Canterbury."

" I should conclude," said the female, " that it must be some religious festival that is to be celebrated, from the numerous monks and pilgrims that mingle with the crowd. What day is it ?"

" It is *Translation* day."

The foreigners looked on the speaker with surprise. Though they understood the English language perfectly well, both were at a loss to make out the meaning of the answer which they had just received. Their friend hastened to explain.

" This, being the seventh of July, is the day of the translation of Thomas Beckett, better known to you, perhaps, as St. Thomas of Canterbury. On this day they raise his remains from the sepulchre, where they have slumbered more

than three centuries. If so disposed, you may see his bones, and, on making a suitable offering, touch them. Doubtless you have heard of the wonder-working power of these far famed relics."

" I have heard of many miracles here performed. Not only bodily infirmities have been healed, but even sadness of heart, so I have read, can be at once dispelled by the touch of these same relics."

" Then haste ye Ferdinand," cried the lady, " haste, make your offering, and be well ; if indeed the bones of St. Thomas of Canterbury can give the troubled heart repose."

" I fear me Mariana," Ferdinand replied with a deep sigh, " repose can only be bestowed on my heart by that which shall stop its vibrations for ever."

The tone in which he spoke produced a momentary pause. Edmund wished to dispel the gloom which had come over them, and replied, with vivacity,

" Never think so, man. Look at the

devout pilgrims around you — look at the merriment which is in their faces, and listen to the blithe sounds which greet the ear in all directions, and if you were sceptical in other instances, you shall be constrained to admit, that the remains of the saint are at least potent to dispel care and remove sadness of spirit.”

He was justified in the reference which he made to the crowd. Instead of that solemnity which might be expected on the part of those who from religious motives had performed a long journey to visit the grave of a saint, the majority of the thousands assembled seemed brought together merely to enjoy the amusements of a common holiday. However pious and sublime their contemplations when they entered upon their pilgrimage, their austerity and reserve had gradually diminished, till at length, kept in countenance by each other, and in many cases excited by the refreshment which they had thought good for their earthly taber-



nacles, boisterous laughter had supplanted reverential silence, and jollity was everywhere predominant.

Though Ferdinand had expressed a belief, that not even the bones of St. Thomas of Canterbury could secure him peace of mind, he was reluctant to pass through a city in which an object so venerated was to be found, without making his offering at the shrine, to which so many of the devout repaired ; and perhaps, mingled with religion, something of curiosity made him not indisposed to seek the grand object of attraction. But the situation in which he saw Mariana precluded him from doing so at that moment. He replied,

“ I am not of the number of those to whom you would direct my attention. These, relieved for a season from the ordinary toils of life, cannot but be joyful. Although I have never intruded on you the history of those cares and sorrows which are the inmates of my bosom, you

will perhaps be able to believe that ordinary griefs would not depress my spirits, as you have not unfrequently seen them depressed. I cannot hope, that even the remains of a saint have power to remove my sadness, yet I would not unwillingly see them, if this could be. But Mariana cannot endure the violent pressure which those who approach them must sustain, and I do not judge it fitting to separate from her."

Edmund remarked that ere long the difficulty would be removed. It was probable that the throng which then strove to enter the cathedral, in order to proceed on their bare knees to the grave, would diminish. At all events, on gaining an inn where they could dispose their horses, Mariana might rest in safety under his protection, while Ferdinand repaired to the church.

This seemed plausible, and slowly as they advanced, they calculated on very

soon reaching an inn. They were not wrong in this, but when they had done so, it was only to learn that they must go further. Every apartment was already so crowded that those who belonged to the house were as anxious to repel, as under ordinary circumstances they would have been to welcome, fresh guests.

However reluctant to take such a course, they made new efforts to break through the crowd, in the hope of finding a less frequented inn, where they might rest themselves and their horses, which were more fatigued by the impediments they had encountered since they entered Canterbury, than from the exertions which had brought them to that city from Dover. The search was useless. Every house that promised accommodation to travellers was in the situation of that which they had first reached, and they saw the end of the town without finding any place in which they

could gain permission to rest themselves, or obtain the slightest refreshment.

The influx of visitors had that year been remarkably great. That this would be the case was partially foreseen, and as it appeared certain that all who came could not be entertained in the city, a number of tents and temporary huts had been set up in the neighbouring fields, near the road side. These were furnished with benches and tables, in which those who carried provisions with them were allowed for a small gratuity to eat, and some refreshments were prepared for sale by the itinerant proprietors of these temporary erections.

Exhausted as the persons to whom our attention has been principally directed were, they did not disdain even the humble shelter and sordid fare to be obtained in one of these. It was not in the first instance quite certain that they could be received in a tent, but Edmund

had the good fortune to observe a party rise from a form, and to secure it before any other customers could occupy it.

The tent which received them was large enough to contain from twenty to thirty persons. A number of voices demanded the attention of the master, and his presence was required in five or six places at the same moment. Some young men who wore the appearance of mechanics, and were seated near the entrance, distinguished themselves by the loudness of their calls. To appease them, a young female of interesting appearance, bearing an infant at her bosom, stepped forward with a flaggon of ale in her hand, which she set before them.

“Is the knave your husband or master (if he be either the one or the other), deaf?” a man, differing from the others in appearance, inquired.

The person who thus questioned her was apparently between forty and fifty years of age. His small piercing eyes

were continually winking to one or other of the company, and these, with his flat nose and long chin, which moved up and down with a rapidity corresponding with the knowing glances he unceasingly bestowed, threw a vulgar but comic expression into his countenance, which well disposed those who looked on him to laugh, and his words proved that it was not his wish to repress the risibility provoked by his features.

The young woman made no answer at first, but on the question being sarcastically repeated by the same speaker, "It might be well," said she, "that he were deaf, if he often met with the like of you."

"What dost mean by that? Dost think, for all that simple downcast look of thine, I am like to suppose he is not accustomed to a greater din than I, with these lusty bawlers to aid me, can make? If he be your husband—

"What then?" said the master of the

tent sternly interposing, and fixing his dark full eye on his guest, with an expression of wrath which told that little provocation would suffice to urge him to something more than looks or even words.

“What then?” replied the other, mimicking the angry tone of the interrogatory; “why then I’ll wager a groat against one gallon of ale, which is marvellous odds, being more than three to one, that thou art not her master.”

“It is of little import to thee, so thou hast thy flaggon, whether I be or not.”

“Thou declinest the wager. Thou art wise. But it was from thyself that I learned that thou wast not.”

“How may that be, seeing I have not changed word with thee till now.”

“Marry, I learned it from your head-gear. I knew that the reason of your wearing your cap close over both your ears was, that you found such precaution right needful to protect the drums of .

them from the shrill tongue of your meek helpmate."

There was something singular in the appearance of the man. The cap which had been noticed was made of black worsted. In front it reached to his eyebrows, and on the sides it came down completely over his organs of hearing, the ends of the cap being tied under his chin. His beard was untrimmed, and looked as if it had been carelessly shortened with scissors. He was unwashed, his hair was as much neglected as his beard, and a scar on his cheek disfigured him not a little, and contributed to that sternness, not to name it ferocity, which his whole countenance exhibited, but which beamed from his eyes at the moment when his customer jested on his hearing, with a wrathful lustre not to be mistaken. He made an effort to repress his ire, at least so far as the person who had spoken to him was concerned, but it quickly rekindled when he turned to the



female, who had remained the trembling spectator of that fury which the careless language of the stranger had called forth.

“ And why are you here ?” he impetuously demanded.

“ I but came with —”

“ And who bade you come ?”

“ You were loudly called for, and seeing you already engaged, I thought to ease you of some slight fatigue.”

“ I called thee not — wouldst come at another’s bidding ?”

“ I,” replied the wife, while tears of anguish streamed down her youthful face, “ I thought not to disquiet thee ; instead thereof I —”

“ Be dumb — get hence.”

The poor girl, for such she was in years, made no reply, but hastened to obey the harshly uttered mandate of her husband.

Edmund, Ferdinand, and Mariana regarded the retiring female with pitying looks. When she was out of sight, the

person who had moved the husband's displeasure spoke again.

"I'll tell you a secret, Mr. Ale-huckster, which you may tell, if you like, to your dame."

"And what may that be?"

"Why, that if I, being as I am but nobody, were that same wife of yours so saucily snubbed to-day while you had a troop of fellows to stand by you, I would shew you no quarter to-morrow when alone."

The master of the tent had expected something serious, and disgusted with the trifling of his guest, he contemptuously turned away with the exclamation of "Fool!"

"Fool!" cried the other, "I wish you would make good your speech. If you call me fool, give me the pay of one."

"A cudgelling is often the pay of a fool, and that I shall be much inclined to bestow upon you, for little solicitation."

"Take care, mind what you say. I,

Master Nicholas Bray, being no common person, am not to be taunted with impunity."

"Then you, Master Bray, had better bear in mind the rules of civility, (good-breeding is not to be expected), or bray somewhere else."

"For matter of that, Mr. Huckster, good-breeding might perchance be thrown away on so poor a judge of it as you are. Never think to scold me as you do your wife, unless you can fight."

"And how in that case?"

"Then strip you as I shall do. Throw off your doublet and that same elegant cap; *throw off your cap*, I say, and I am your man."

The proprietor of the tent had at first seemed very well disposed to put the mettle of his customer to the proof, but he now drew back scrutinizing the countenance of the latter without speaking.

"Ah! ha!" cried the stranger "is it so. What, you are at length awake, are you?"

You know who I am and what I can do; but, be dumb ; get hence," he added, mimicking the manner in which the wife had been ordered to withdraw.

No reply was offered, and prompt obedience was yielded to the command of Mr. Nicholas Bray.

## CHAP. II.

He being a martyr for the papacy, was more extolled than all the apostles or primitive saints had ever been. So, that for three hundred years, he was accounted one of the greatest saints in heaven."

BISHOP BURNET.

**F**ERDINAND and Edmund, after the wife retired, had engaged in conversation, and paid no attention to the irritating speeches which were exchanged, till fighting was proposed. It was with astonishment that they saw the churlish husband silenced by one, for whom, a moment before, he had evinced the most sovereign contempt. The unmerited harshness with which he had spoken to the female prevented them from feeling more than surprise. But it was necessary that one of the newly arrived party should speak to him, which had hitherto been prevented by the alter-

cation. Rising for this purpose, Edmund followed him. He had retired into a small adjunct to the tent, partly formed of wood and partly with sail-cloth. Edmund presented himself at the entrance to it. The man was seated. He had covered his eyes with his hands, and was much agitated.

“ This is through thy doings,” he said, in the same indignant tone which had before distressed his wife. “ But for thy foolery I had ’scaped this knave.

The female bore the reproach without offering a word in reply. But the affliction which it caused she could not conceal; and though she averted her face, she was unable to controul the sobs which repeatedly shook her slender frame.

Her distress escaped not the notice of her lord. The gloomy displeasure which sat on his countenance had not abated. But when he saw her silent agony, and perceived the tears which had fallen from her eyes bathing the hand of her infant,

a touch of nature seemed to wake him to pity and remorse.

“ It was wholly through thee,” he said, as if he had felt it necessary to offer some justification of his wrath. “ But,” he added, with much more kindness in his manner, “ it was not thy intent to fret me.”

The effects of this relenting speech, were more striking than those of his indignation had been. It was as if grief had gained, from the remission of severity, a licence to be audible, and the eyes of the wife, in the moment when she strove to dry them, overflowed faster than before.

“ Nay, weep no more,” cried the husband, and a smile of comfort, amidst sobs and tears, illumined the face of the wife. He rose from his seat and turned towards her, but started at perceiving Edmund, and advanced to meet him in confusion, which he did not conquer even

when he perceived it was only a new guest.

“ I—I did not expect—” he stammered. “ I would say I did not anticipate—or rather, I did not know that I was wanted. What may you seek, my master? ”

“ I desire to know if you have any refreshments remaining of your store, to set before myself and my two companions.”

“ You will find but scanty fare here, and that not such in quality as gentles, like you, would care to regale with.”

“ Little need be said on that subject. We come here merely because we cannot gain entrance elsewhere; you therefore owe us no thanks for our custom, and no apology for the coarseness of the viands which we may find.”

“ Salted beef you may have. For the manchet loaves, they are all consumed; but we have brown bread, not bad of the sort.”



“ This will suffice, but can you bring it soon ?”

“ It shall be served anon.”

“ And for the horses, can you do aught for them ?”

“ They shall have water, and they can graze with tolerable safety in the field, provided you first take off their saddles.”

“ Why shall that make them more secure ?”

“ By reason that the returning pilgrim, who desires an animal of that description, would much prefer stealing a horse saddled, to bearing off one not so furnished.”

There was something too rational in this remark to admit of its correctness being doubted. Edmund failed not to take the hint, and to act upon it without loss of time. On re-entering the tent, he found their humble table already spread, and what rather surprised him, the wife in attendance on Ferdinand and Mariana. Another flaggon of ale having

been demanded by Mr. Nicholas Bray; it was served by the female. This Ferdinand remarked as singular, after the anger which she had so recently incurred for acting the same part. Such apparent disobedience did not escape the notice of Bray, who seemed well disposed to indulge in a jest on the occasion, but the voices of his companions were too loud to afford him a chance of being heard at the moment, and before a pause had occurred, the woman had retired, and the opportunity for bringing his witticism, or what he mistook for one, to a good market, was lost.

“Saw ye the saint to day,” cried one of his companions to the person opposite to him.

“Marry did I,” was the answer of a very sanctified looking pilgrim, whose grey beard gave him rather a venerable aspect.

“And did you profit thereby?”

“Marvellously; for behold this whit-

low, which till then was fearfully sore and angry, is by virtue of that touch almost well."

And in proof of this he exhibited his finger, on which a whitlow nearly healed was seen.

"You ought to pay the saint well then for his medical virtue," cried Bray; "but I wonder you did not make free to get another cure out of his bones."

"A cure for what?"

"Why for that tumour on thy nose."

This produced a laugh at the ruby ornament of the pilgrim's face, at which he seemed to be rather offended; for notwithstanding that he had found it convenient to fall into such company, he wished to appear devout, and was really anxious for the reputation of the saint.

"Methinks, Master Nicholas, your humour carries you to jest on matters which are little fitted to become subjects of ribbald mirth."

"Thou sayest that with enough of

gravity, but much I doubt thy countenance would not so excellently accord with thy speech, if thou didst not feel more concern in respect of the laugh at thy nose, than thou wouldst for a slight passed on the most wonder-working bone belonging to Saint Thomas his skeleton."

"You are a profligate wanting grace to believe in the virtues of the saint, and doubting, like others of the vulgar, that miracles have really been performed through the virtues of his wisely revered remains."

"What thou now sayest, for all that thou art a pilgrim, hath some truth in it. But if thou wouldst remove my doubts, hie thee back to the tomb with thy nose, and solicit the wisely revered remains of the saint to quench the little Etna there blazing."

A new laugh at the pilgrim's expence followed this speech. He, however, was not moved by it to seek that proof of

the efficacy of the martyr's bones which had been sneeringly called for.

" I hope," said Bray, " you kissed the saint's shoe."

" I did."

" There you were right. By the bye I think the shoe was more wisely kept than all the rest of his relics."

" And why?"

" Because it was only by preserving St. Thomas his shoe, that the priests could with certainty manage to save *his sole*."

" Irreverent unbeliever!" exclaimed the pilgrim, raising his eyes with an expression of horror.

" Never shew the whites of your squinters in that way, for fear you should overstrain them, and that done, all your prayers to the good Saint Thomas would hardly get your sight restored, as was that of Master Ailwardus, the *whetstone stealer*, on his paying his respects to the name of Becket."

" I know not that; seeing nothing is

more certain than that a poor bird, which had been taught to speak, being pursued by a hawk, on merely calling out 'O St. Thomas, save me!' saw straight its enemy fall dead, and therefore ——"

"Spare the inference which you would draw from this undoubted truth. I believe it as sincerely as you can, and have only to hope, that if cock sparrows are to learn speech, they will not be licensed to utter such nonsense as you are dealing forth."

"Thou art as a dog which barketh he knoweth not at what."

"Thou art as a cat which setteth up her tail, and putteth out her tiny claws about nothing, and where such shew of small war can be of none avail. What is Saint Tommy to thee?"

"Whatever idlers may suppose or tell, sufficient proofs exist of the miraculous power of these relics, and not only of the power of his bones, but also that of his of mere habiliments. Who shall deny that

his shirt, made by no common mortal hands, but sewed by the Virgin herself, hath comforted many women in travail?"

"It may be so."

"To the truth of this myself can speak."

"Peradventure it may have given thee posterity, and removed thy wife's despair."

"It is but two years come next latter Lammas, that Winifred Wriggleford, being sorely grieved that she had as yet no infant, on my suggestion application was made for the shirt of St. Thomas of Canterbury, and marvellous to state, the prayer having been granted, in very brief space dame Winifred brought forth two man children."

"O, for matter of that, I doubt not the shirt of St. Thomas (if indeed a shirt of his can now be found) might be made to bring comfort and relief to many a thriving dame, who might yield twins after the manner of Winifred Wriggle-

ford, care being taken in one particular with respect to the said shirt."

"In what way?"

"Why by especially remembering to provide a moderately young and lusty gallant to wear it."

Another laugh followed, in which the pilgrim himself thought it prudent to join, to escape further ridicule.

The master of the tent had overheard the latter part of the conversation, and now came forward.

"It is all too likely," said he, addressing himself to Edmund, "that the conversation of those who are near may be little to your taste, and you have a maiden with you who has not been accustomed to such society. If she would rather withdraw, the small hut which joins this tent, and the attendance of the female whom you have seen, shall be at her command."

The unexpected courtesy of their host was not despised. There was no pros-



pect of improvement in the manner or language of those near them, and the friends gladly availed themselves of his offer.

Mariana then retired. The owner of the tent did not again quit it, but took his station near the entrance of the retreat in which he had previously been seen with his wife. Ferdinand and Edmund felicitated themselves on the opportunity which had thus been afforded to the companion of their journey of more conveniently resting herself. Satisfied that from interest, if not from inclination, their host would feel anxious to guard against any intrusion, their thoughts now turned to the tomb of Beckett. Edmund had seen all the ceremonies in former years, but Ferdinand, having never been in England before, was desirous of witnessing them. They considered, that for so short a time as would be necessary to afford this gratification, they might safely leave Mariana ; and they accord-

ingly, having mentioned their purpose to the man of the booth, re-entered the town, and made their way towards Christ-church, which was then dedicated to and called after Saint Thomas.

The crowd was still great, but their youth and strength enabled them to get forward faster than many of the zealots in the midst of whom they found themselves. They passed up the steps leading into the chapel on their knees. Some made a shew of baring their limbs, but the respect which Edmund and his friend felt for the memory of St. Thomas of Canterbury, did not induce them to imitate this act of piety, and both observed, that several of those who made such a display were provided with small mats to interpose between their flesh and the stones over which they advanced towards the sepulchre.

They soon found themselves near that spot, so dear to superstition, to which the body of Thomas Becket had been con-

signed. A splendid shrine, enclosed with an iron grating, had been raised. This was about five feet in height, and was built of marble. The erection was carried still higher with boarding, which was wholly concealed from the view by massy plates of gold, on which images of angels, the Virgin Mary, and the saints, had been most elaborately worked. The sloping and highly decorated top was removed on these occasions, and the golden chest in which the bones of Becket rested, and the wooden case in which that was deposited, had been lifted from the grave. So much of the saint had been carried off at different times by his votaries, that but little now remained for exhibition. The skull, crowned with laurel, and surrounded by a thin transparent substance intended to resemble the *halo* with which painters were accustomed to adorn their representations of celestial personages, was placed in a most conspicuous situation, care being taken

that the fracture and the piece fitted into the hole again, together with the point of the sword broken in the head, should not escape notice. These vouchers for the identity of the relics were carefully pointed out by those who took the lead in conducting the solemnities. Other bones were disposed around, but it was to the skull that attention was principally directed. On this those whose devotion might be languid were ready, from curiosity, to fix their most ardent gaze. All were anxious to report that they had seen the wound inflicted on a bishop more than three hundred and fifty years before, which, though fatal to his life, had procured for his memory lasting renown, and placed the honours rendered to his name among the most extraordinary incidents recorded in the history of mankind.

Ferdinand gazed with breathless interest on the extraordinary spectacle. Enormous candlesticks of massy silver

sustained the tall lights which threw their glare on the bones of the murdered churchman, surrounded by the shining oblations of credulous wealth, which, in gold, in jewels of rare worth, and orient pearls of extraordinary size, astonished the beholders with their splendour. The prior of the monastery pointed to these occasionally with a white wand, and proclaimed the names of their donors. The bishops and monks who encompassed the shrine added to the effect of the scene by raising their voices, not in the pensive strains of mourning, or the tremulous tones of supplication, but with the bold song of boundless exultation in the earthly fame and everlasting glory of the departed. While listening to the solemn sounds, and contemplating the clouds of frankincense which arose from the glistening chalices on all sides, the contrast was most powerful between the dazzling magnificence of the preparations, and the grim

and dismal aspect of the object of them. This forcibly struck the youthful friends, and both felt that the awful majesty of death was not to be subdued, and that all the pomp with which folly might deck his victim, though for a moment it might invite the attention to other subjects, would eventually make the lifeless, fleshless remains flash on the vision more ghastly, more terrific than if exhibited without disguise.

The increasing pressure behind admonished Edmund and Ferdinand to make way for others. They accordingly quitted the tomb, and were conducted by the force of the current, which it was impossible for them to resist, to the altar in the cloister, before which Becket had been slain. Here they contemplated the exact spot on which his blood had been shed, as indicated by a small slip of marble inserted in the stone on which the supposed saint had perished. That portion of the stone which had actually been

stained with the blood of the dying priest, had been carefully cut out and sent to the Pope, to swell the holy treasures of the Vatican. Numerous pilgrims however struggled for the honour of kissing the ground on which the martyr had perished.

Ferdinand and Edmund left the cathedral as soon as they could extricate themselves from the crowd. Taking their way through the town, they had nearly approached the tent in which Mariana expected them, when they met the party which had been seated near them, with Mr. Nicholas Bray at their head. He accosted Edmund as one of whom he had had some previous knowledge. The latter, astonished at this, demanded to know where they had been acquainted. Nicholas shook his head and replied,

“ Time has been you would not have much tasked your memory to know who Nick Bray was, and that too in the reign

of our present merciful and gentle monarch good king Henry the Eighth."

"It may be so."

"Nay, my sweet master Edmund Sherborne, it is so. When I had the honour to be fool to my Lord Cardinal, your father being alive, and you a very youngster, you then knew every bell on my bonnet."

"I must confess that you have reason in what you say."

"You have hit on my misfortune. I have reason, and indeed it was found so calamitously abundant in me, that I was thought no good fool, and so got flouted, as one not well skilled in the art of making himself ridiculous."

"I now remember you well, but before I knew you not. Nor will you wonder at this, when I remind you that valour was not formerly in the list of your good qualities, and therefore you ran small risk of being recognized when you so boldly challenged yon grim-looking, threatening ale-master."



“ Truth to tell, I exposed myself to little danger in proposing to him that we should fight on the terms which I propounded, and therefore in this case I have gained, as greater men have done before me, a reputation for courage without exposing my person to peril.”

“ Is he whom you challenged then so arrant a coward that you could be sure he would not take you at your word.”

“ I know not that, but this I know, that he is one who cares not to be met by those who know him. Not a twelve-month past, I saw him in the pillory, and saw his ears cut as beautifully close to his skull as ever were those of a puppy dog at Finsbury. Therefore, he now wears that same cap, which I required him to doff before we fought, well knowing, as the old saying runs, he “dared not do it *for his ears.*”

## CHAP. III.

Sleep steals away  
 The wild desires of men and toils of day ;  
 And brings, descending through the silent air,  
 A sweet forgetfulness of human care.

POPE.

THE information thus communicated made Edmund anxious to return to the tent with all possible expedition. Though during their brief absence little danger could be apprehended, he felt uneasy at the idea of having left Mariana for a moment in the care of one whose villany had subjected him to a punishment so disgraceful as that which the ale-vender had sustained. Such a character it was easy to believe desperate enough for anything, though it was difficult to imagine any enterprize to which he could be tempted that ought to give them any immediate concern.

On their return they saw Mariana,

who reported nothing to the prejudice of those with whom she had been left. The man had not approached the small apartment in which she rested, and the female had waited on her with the most respectful attention.

They determined to go forward. Edmund presented the master of the tent with a recompence which he supposed would be considered liberal. The man received it with an air of discontent. Edmund added to it what he thought must produce some expression of gratitude. The receiver sullenly bowed, but was silent. He afterwards did that which might be considered to indicate that he was not dissatisfied with his guests ; he advised them to remain there for the night. Numbers, he observed, would be on the road during the hours of darkness, and it was to be expected that a great proportion of these would be in a state of intoxication. Thence he drew this inference, that scenes of riot were likely to

occur, which those to whom he addressed himself would willingly avoid. He suggested, that it might be better for them to remain till the dawn, when they would be able to advance with more celerity than they could otherwise calculate upon, and escape much inconvenience, and possibly some danger, to which they must be exposed if they journeyed by night.

In this reasoning, however specious, Ferdinand saw but the sordid argument of one who hoped to profit by their stay, opposed to their progress. He considered that their horses would soon leave those behind whose society they wished to shun, and therefore judged it advisable to make no further delay ; but one of the animals was not to be found, and though diligent search was made in the neighbouring fields, it was no where seen. While thus detained, they saw the sun set, and the gloom of evening came on. They were in consequence induced to take the counsel of their host into serious con-

sideration ; and not knowing where to find a more commodious resting place, they decided to remain where they were.

The night proved one of remarkable beauty, the moon shone with a mild splendour on the lofty towers of the cathedral, which were seen above the houses of the city from the meadow where the tent was pitched, and every moving object on the road was almost as distinctly visible as by day. This circumstance made the travellers regret their detention ; but to reconsider the resolution which they had come to was useless, as the difficulty opposed to their advance was perfectly insuperable. Their host having at length dismissed all his other guests, proposed to mount one of the remaining horses in order to seek the animal which had strayed. They consented to his doing so, when a suspicion glanced across the mind of Edmund, growing out of the information which he had received from Nicholas Bray, that it might be the intention of

the man to abscond. He therefore resolved to accompany him.

They immediately departed, and Ferdinand and Mariana, allured by the fineness of the weather, walked forth in the field, gazing on the several objects which became conspicuous in the moonlight, and listening to the various sounds of mirth, contention, and devotion, which ascended from different parties of pilgrims who had already commenced their journey towards the metropolis. They ventured not to lose sight of the tent, but withdrawing themselves as far from the road as they could to keep it in their view, the noises which have been mentioned gave them no disturbance, and all immediately around the spot on which they found themselves was silent. Both, occupied with their own reflections, forgot to speak, and no word was uttered for some minutes. Ferdinand had halted, as if to imprint on his memory the scenery which claimed

his attention on this the first evening of his being in England. Mariana, leaning on his arm, glanced at the same objects, and then at the countenance of her relation, as if to read the impression which they made on him.

He perceived that her eyes rested upon him, and starting from the reverie in which he had indulged, accosted her.

“At length, my beloved niece, for though our ages are so nearly equal, heaven has placed you in that relation to me, we are in the famous and opulent land which you know it has long been my object to visit, and in which you will find a peaceful home. I rejoice that my cares are nearly ended, so far as you are concerned; and I trust your bosom swells with holy transport, anticipating the speedy arrival of that moment which shall unite you for ever to some pious sisterhood, and place you where your hours shall never be disturbed with the vain contentions of a sinful world.”

Mariana spoke not.

"You make no reply. Must I thence conclude that you are unreconciled to the step which I hold indispensable to your safety."

"Forgive me, Ferdinand, if I err. I wish to be in all things resigned to your will; but I must not dissemble, it would glad me if that which you purpose might be spared me."

"And why? In this country which has been famed for liberty—"

"For liberty, Ferdinand! Is it therefore that I am brought to England to be immured in a convent?"

"Even so: for liberty and equal laws, the cause and consequence of the prosperity of this famed land, leave it less exposed to internal commotions like those which afflict other countries, and consequently ensure you, in a religious abode, that uninterrupted repose which might elsewhere be sought in vain."



“ But reflect on the shudderings which will, which must, invade my feeble frame, when I see myself consigned, yet alive, to a dreary sepulchre in a foreign land !”

“ The foe of your own peace, you conjure up ghastly phantoms, which, if I were weak enough to regard them, might leave you exposed to all the dire realities which form but too frequently the melancholy history of woman’s bud and bloom.”

“ Are not these braved by others ?”

“ Yes, and others fall their victims. I would save you from being added to the number. I would secure your peace, ere your heart has felt the envenomed dart of that peace-destroying demon, called in this language by the name of Love.”

Mariana trembled, and with a faltering voice enquired if love were so much to be dreaded.

“ Even as perdition,” he replied, “ for to

that he often conducts his votary. What is the fate of many a beauty, whom the unthinking many deem fortunate? Worn for a brief season in the bosom of admiring man, then loathed, reviled, and slighted. Heard you not the hind who owns yon tent but a few hours ago, how harshly he could rebuke a woman, he who quailed and fled before the wrath of a saucy brawler? I saw the tear of bitter anguish fall from those eyes, which shone as bright as yours, to mar a face which, in despite of the mean habiliments of its owner, I thought most rich in heavenly beauty."

"I marked what you have noted; but I also marked that before the tear had finished its short course, one word of kindness, nay, one relenting look, could speak peace to the troubled heart."

"But is it well to be thus dependent on the wayward humours of a capricious mortal? A higher happier destiny is

yours. To God devoted from your youth, He, when the roses vanish from your cheeks, the lustre from your eyes, and when the music of your voice shall be changed into discord, will not forsake nor condemn his worshipper. Trust me Mariana, the comfort, the pure joy which this thought will inspire, shall far exceed the transient rapture which, under happiest circumstances, could be known in those scenes from which I remove you."

Mariana presumed not to reason in opposition to one whom in infancy she had loved as a brother, and whom in riper years she had learned to reverence as a parent ; but the mournful air of resignation with which she listened to his voice attested, that, if prepared to yield obedience to his decision, it was not from conviction that he was pointing out the course most conducive to her happiness. In truth the very kindness for which she was grateful, in sparing her a knowledge of the evils of life, had tended to any

thing rather than to fortify her mind against those regrets, which at sixteen a blooming female may be expected to feel, when about to be snatched from all that she has learned to covet and admire.

Ferdinand perceived that his words had silenced but not convinced his niece; and he was about to make a new appeal to her understanding, when the trampling of horses gave notice of the return of Edmund with the owner of the tent, after having recovered the horse which had been missing. The lateness of the hour reconciled them to prolonging their stay, as they had before intended, till day-break. Mariana was committed to the care of the female with whom she had previously rested; Ferdinand and Edmund stretched themselves on two benches near that appendage of the tent to which their charge retired, and the proprietor withdrew to the corner most remote from them, where, sitting by a table,

he reclined his head on his arm, and seemed endeavouring to compose himself to sleep.

When suspicion is once introduced into a mind, which has not been accustomed to harbour it, the most trivial circumstances suffice to keep it alive. From the moment that Edmund had heard of the ignominious punishment to which the vender of ale had been subjected, he thought it necessary to watch all his movements, and in each turn, in every look, he discovered something equivocal. He had thought it possible that it was intended to rob them of their horses, when the man offered to seek the animal which had been lost; and Edmund was not convinced that no such plan had been formed, when the creature was found at a distance of less than a mile from the spot where the search commenced. Repeatedly he had perceived that the eyes of his late companion were steadfastly fixed on him, he thought with an

expression of malevolence, and the confusion in which his face was averted, if Edmund suddenly turned to him, strengthened the idea thus conceived. He now doubted of its being really his intention to sleep, and determined for his own part, without disturbing his companion by communicating his thoughts, to remain awake himself. Ferdinand was not wont to pass much of his time in slumber, but, the very few hours which they had devoted to repose, made him then desirous of sleep. Previous fatigue seconded his wishes, and he enjoyed a brief respite from care. Edmund imitated the breathing of one who enjoys sound repose, while his eyes directed to the extremity of the tent, watched the object of his suspicion with unremitting vigilance.

He seemed to sleep, but Edmund was soon convinced that he was awake. The man gently moved, then raised his head from the table, and looked anxiously towards his guests, as if to ascertain

whether his motions were observed. Edmund closed his eyes. In a few moments he heard the splashing of water. He could perceive that the party he thought it right to watch was indulging in a luxury, which from his begrimed appearance he had concluded he seldom coveted, that of washing. In performing this operation, he was most careful not to make a noise, and he repeatedly looked towards those whom he supposed to be sleeping, to satisfy himself that they had not been disturbed. This conduct appeared very singular; but Edmund could scarcely believe his eyes while he saw the being, whose disregard of his person had struck him at first as remarkable, was actually painting his face. When he had performed this operation, the taper, which till then had been kept burning, was extinguished. As the bell of the cathedral was sounding the midnight hour, the man made his exit from the tent. In doing this, he observed a

cautious silence, and when he was on the outside, Edmund listened in vain for the sound of his footsteps. For some minutes all was profoundly still, when a slight movement near him attracted his attention. He arose, and looking through a rent, perceived at a short distance the individual whose conduct was so suspicious. The moon was obscured, but there was sufficient light to enable Edmund to see distinctly that the suspected carried what seemed to be some deadly weapon; Edmund believed it to be a musket. Having occupied himself with it for a few seconds, the man lifted it to his eye, as if to take aim, though no object at which it could be levelled appeared in sight. Determined not to remain in uncertainty, Edmund left the tent. He came behind its owner, who started with unfeigned amazement, at finding one so near him. His confusion assured Edmund that he had not wronged him, and rushing forward, that he



might not have time to recover himself, he rudely seized the arm which held the supposed instrument of death.

“Hold, villain !” he exclaimed, “what base design are you about to carry into execution ?”

No resistance was attempted ; no reply was offered ; guilt—detected guilt—it struck Edmund, deprived the baffled wretch of speech. He suffered himself to be disarmed, without making the slightest effort to prevent it, or to escape ; and Edmund, now looking at what he had believed to be a musket, found that he held in his hand a hollow stick, in which several glasses were inserted, to form an instrument somewhat resembling that which, though almost unknown in the early part of the sixteenth century, has since been in no small request with the scientific of all nations—the telescope.

## CHAP. IV.

No man ne may my sorrow glade  
 That mak'th my hew to fal and fade,  
 And hath myn understanding lorne,  
 That me is wo, that I was borne.

CHAUCER.

**EDMUND** was much surprised at this discovery. He examined the tube carefully, to ascertain that it was really what it appeared to be.

"It is passing strange," he at length said, addressing the man whom he had so rudely interrupted, "that at the dead hour of night you should thus occupy yourself, instead of seeking the repose which wearied nature claims."

"Perhaps it is strange; yet methinks, being harmless as strange, I might have hoped to 'scape interruption. Surely it is no offence to look from earth to heaven. Mean and lonely as my estate

is, I thought I might claim a right, not denied to other reptiles, to view yon celestial bodies in their mysterious course, although it were too much to flatter myself, that in all that glittering host one star would beam with kindly influence on me."

"I regret that I interrupted you. But when I perceived you coming near those whom you supposed to be sleeping, as it struck me in guilty silence, having some mortal weapon in your hand, I could not choose but arrest you. Little did I dream that one of your calling could have taste or capacity for studies so sublime as those to which it should seem you are devoted. For astronomy, it is a science I do love."

"I know it, Edmund," interrupted the other, "that is, I—I—" he faltered in confusion. "I doubt not you have learned to prize that which is in itself so noble."

"You named me!" cried Edmund,

whose surprise, before great, was now wrought up to the highest pitch, by this new recognition. "Who are you? Where have we met before, that I should have been known to you, and that familiarly, as your speech would lead me to conclude?"

The stranger was silent for some seconds. He at length said,—

"I wear my disguise but illy. I have betrayed myself, and cannot now escape. You would not always have started to hear yourself so accosted by Clifford."

"Amazement! My old schoolmate, Clifford!"

"It is even so. Now knowing who I am, nothing remains but that I retire, for I doubt not the tale of my shame has reached you, and you are prepared to recede from the companion of your early days with disgust and abhorrence."

There was a melancholy plaintiveness in his voice, which, in spite of Clifford's endeavours to appear firm and resigned

to what he deemed inevitable, spoke acute anguish, and went to the heart of Edmund. He replied in a softer tone,

“ I cannot deny that I have heard of your punishment. The crime for which it was inflicted I have not heard, but to confess all the truth I must infer —”

“ From the measureless ignominy heaped upon me, that guilt, the most monstrous guilt, has been proved. Such is the reasoning of mankind. Misery is considered evidence of crime, of which this very treatment commonly makes it the parent. But hence these reflections. I wish not to intrude them on you, nor yet the story of my woe.”

He turned from Edmund, and had begun to walk away. The latter followed him.

“ From me, Clifford, you need not fly. Trust me, I grieve to see you thus depressed. However others may think it right to act, I would not lend a deaf ear to aught that you would say ; and should

it be in my power to serve an old play-fellow, you need not doubt my inclination, if —”

“ If he can prove himself not unworthy of it. But that is impossible. You are sincere, but who will believe the unsupported statement of a degraded culprit in opposition to the oaths of men who should be holy, and who are reputed to be so. Their perjuries must be believed, but I, who am accounted guilty of perjury, cannot hope to obtain credit. But why should I complain. To my own vices I should attribute all.”

“ My astonishment is great, nor is my affliction less, at this rencounter.”

“ I do not wonder at it. Low as I am I expect that all who recognise me will be grieved to acknowledge that they know me. It was not my wish to become candidate for your pity, and I now ask not your endurance. Farewell.”

“ Stay.—Old schoolfellows must not part thus. My curiosity is marvellously

wrought upon. Of your story I know nothing. A knave, who may have deceived me, did say that he had seen you in the pillory. But I asked for no particulars, not suspecting that the abject ale-vender you seemed —”

“ And that I am.”

“ Not suspecting,” Edmund continued, “ that you had ever been friend to me. Tell me the circumstances which have thus reduced you ?”

“ To do so will be but to abuse your patience ; but not to vex your ear by tedious details, these, in brief, are the facts. The giddy follies of my youth gave some scandal to my friends. The abbot of Mount Sinai, the superior of the priests of the Trinity at Leaden-hall, was most severe on me for these, and laboured, I thought malignantly, to aggravate my wanderings, and to inflame against me all who had once interested themselves in my welfare.”

“ He is famed for exemplary piety.

Doubtless it was his object to reclaim."

"To reclaim! *He* reclaim?"

"But now you admitted that your vices were the causes of your misery."

"True,—true; and I am a wretch to complain of the hostility of any one, having been so long my own enemy."

"The abbot then reproved your wanderings?"

"He did. You may judge with what effect from that which I shall now relate. After a career of degrading folly, on one fatal night I revelled in lower dissipation than any which I had previously known. I suffered myself to be enticed to the *stews* in Southwark, and there, in the common stews, it was my hap to meet the abbot."

"He had dogged you thither."

"Not so, but the same vice had brought us to the self-same spot."

"Impossible!"

"So judge me, God, as I speak the



truth," exclaimed Clifford, while raising his eyes with the most awful solemnity, he seemed to appeal to the Almighty. "A courtesan hung on the monk's arm. He was disguised, but I knew him. I could not be deceived ; and, fool-like, I exulted in the check which I supposed I should thenceforth have on his malice."

"What ensued?"

"You will easily believe that I made no secret of what I had seen. It was the jest of all my companions, and soon of all the city. It reached the abbot's ears, and resenting it with well-dissembled horror for the scandal thus thrown on religion, he demanded — O villain ! — an opportunity to clear himself !"

"Nay, you can have no right to complain of that."

"So say all good men, and so he knew they would say. I had no right to complain ; but mark the means he took. But how can I tell it ! My bursting heart, my burning brain, deny me the power of

connecting and embodying my ideas! He was subjected to a solemn enquiry. Never shall I forget the saintlike meekness with which he carried himself on that occasion."

"Yet from the tone in which you speak, that very meekness seems to have offended you."

"I speak of his outward carriage, assumed but to cover his falsehood and malevolence. Even now the mild language of the wily hypocrite is in my ears. He came not there forsooth to vindicate his own unworthy character. For himself, but too happy to be aspersed and persecuted as the follower of him who died on Calvary, no revengeful feeling would have induced him to clear himself. But it became his duty, for the scandal thrown on that religion of which he was a humble minister. That repelled, he implored those whom he addressed, not to pursue with their just wrath the vindictive spirit which had

called him forth. It was enough that calumny was silenced, and he added, his hands on his bosom, his eyes uplifted to the Deity he outraged, a prayer for me—for me, whom he knew he had laboured by all the arts of frightful perjury to damn.”

“ But his recommendation of clemency was not attended to.”

“ It was. He knew it would be. Well read in the human heart, he had calculated that it would not fail to inflame the holy zeal of those, who having acquitted him, became my judges. I had been compelled to depose to what I saw on oath. For this, I was doomed to the pillory, there to lose my ears.”

“ Unhappily I need not ask if the sentence were carried into execution.”

“ With little delay this was done. It seems a frightful dream, too terrible to recall ; yet alas ! I feel it is one from which I shall never wake to peace. In the broad glare of noon I was taken to

Smithfield, to that spot which martyrs' blood has consecrated to fame and heaven; and there exhibited as an object of scorn and execration to a gaping crowd. This punishment was mine, and yet I live!"

"Speak lower," said Edmund, "or your voice will wake the slumberers in the tent."

"Could it answer to my feelings, like the blast of the latest trumpet, it would wake the dead. I felt the exposure, and thought of nothing else; but when the barbarous knife came to perpetuate on my wretched person the degradation which I sustained, though I mocked the wounds it inflicted, the blood which should have flowed from them seemed to fly to my eyes, and mingle with the tears of shame and rage that streamed from them, while their wildly rolling orbs looked upwards at the blazing sun, as astonished that he could deign to shine on a world the scene of such transcendent crime."

c He paused with emotion. Edmund, affected at his recital, was also silent. Scarcely could he believe what he saw and heard. That Clifford, once the gay companion of his boyhood, and the heir to immense wealth, should stand before him, the poor degraded ale-vender, in whose tent he had rested, appeared incredible, though to doubt was impossible.

“ I am grieved,” said Edmund, “ whatever your imprudence may have been, to see you thus. You have told me much, but I cannot account for your being as you are. Though unjustly punished, I should still have expected that you would not be reduced to that abject state of poverty in which I see you. Your friends might have averted this.”

“ But to which among them could a wretch reeking from the pillory apply? I thought not of the means of living, but only of concealment.”

“ Why then did you not pursue your fortune as a soldier in a distant country?”

“ Could I do it alone? Who that draws a sword would call him comrade who bore the indelible stamp of infamy on his person? I had no resource but to hide among the lowest of the low, or to become a robber. Yes, there was one on which I meditated—self destruction. To this my mind was at one time wrought up, but in the moment when I sought death, my footsteps were arrested by one for whom it became my duty to live. I speak of the poor victim whom you saw yesterday. I loathe myself for reducing her to her present state. I could only hope to procure the means of existence where I was unknown, and in consequence, I assumed this garb, this scar I painted on my face, which I thought would contribute to prevent me from being recognized. Since my disguise concealed me from you, I shall have more confidence in it for the time to come.”

“ And what scheme have you for the future ?”

“ It is my purpose to grovel on a little longer as I now am. Should I be so fortunate as to gain more than will suffice to subsist on, I will pass to the newly-discovered continent, and endeavour to establish myself among some of the native tribes. If they do not put me to death, I may be able to make myself useful, from the little knowledge which I have of the arts, which are deemed important among civilised nations. There my disgrace will not be understood, the peculiarity which they must remark, may pass for the custom of an unknown country, and my life will close in the obscurity I covet; while my child placed among savages, may escape the misery which I have known from being resident in a land of christians.”

“ If such your determination, allow me to contribute towards enabling you to carry it into effect. My purse is not so well replenished as I could wish for your

sake, but such as it is, you are welcome to it."

"You have already done much. When you requited me so liberally for the wretched accommodation you have found here, I feared to express the emotion it called forth. My embarrassment seemed to you dissatisfaction, and you added to your former bounty. I would willingly return what was thus extorted, but feel I should but pain you by the offer. Let that which you have given me in another character suffice, and inflict no new donation."

His manner was decisive, and Edmund abstained from pressing him further. Clifford strove to conceal the emotion which he could not subdue; and Edmund unconsciously walked in an opposite direction, musing on what he had just heard, and endeavouring to devise some expedient by means of which he might better the condition without wounding the feelings of one for



whom, guilty or innocent, he could not but feel interested.

Edmund thought not of sleep. He was anxious to question Clifford on a variety of subjects, but he wanted resolution to do so, and feared that his interrogatories might add to affliction which was even then almost insupportable. He saw that a new day had dawned ; and the gradually increasing light reminded him that the hour fixed upon for their departure had arrived. He returned to the tent, before which Clifford was standing with folded arms, so absorbed in thought that he did not immediately perceive the approach of Edmund.

“ Tell me this,” said Edmund ; “ when the storm burst on you what part in respect to it did your uncle, Lord Erpingham take ? Did he not befriend you ? ”

Clifford was evidently embarrassed. Edmund remarked it, and could not help drawing an unfavourable conclusion therefrom. After a pause of some mi-

minutes, the question being repeated, he replied with extreme agitation,

“ Ask me not. Of Lord Erpingham I would say nothing.” — Then apparently impatient to change the conversation, or to terminate it, he remarked, “ It is already dawn ; I will now prepare your horses.”

“ I would not see you act that servile part for me,” cried Edmund.

“ Nay,” the other answered, “ in serving you I shall serve myself. It will tend towards making me expert in my vocation, which to say truth is not the case at present. He who has acquired accomplishments of which nobles are taught to be proud, finds, when he descends to associate with clowns, that he has not a little to learn before they can regard him as an equal.

“ At all events, as in other days, I will be your comrade,” said Edmund, and he hastened to assist Clifford with the horses.

While they were thus engaged, Ferdinand awoke by the neighing of one of the animals, and perceiving it was dawn, led Mariana from the tent. All was soon ready. The uncle and niece mounted their horses, and only waited for Edmund. He desired them to go forward at a slow pace till he should overtake them ; they complied, and Edmund, turning to Clifford, said,

“ We must part ; but I could wish that we should speedily meet again.”

“ Could any inconceivable good fortune make me again your equal, or were misery, which heaven forefend ! to make you mine, I should be right willing to renew our acquaintance, and would go through the world with you. But while that disparity exists which now separates us, it is not fit that we should meet more. Your friends expect you.—Farewell.—May you be happy.”

“ But tell me how I can communicate with you, should aught transpire which I

may deem it important that you should know."

"It is not in my power to comply with the kind request. You are already aware of my intention to seek a home in the new world. I go not like the multitude in quest of gold, but to escape from scorn and from the haunts of civilised men. Whither my fate may conduct me I cannot surmise: this only can I promise — when I have passed the mighty ocean which now intervenes between me and the shores which I design to traverse, should opportunity offer, I will write to tell you how I fare."

"See you fail not," said Edmund, taking him by the hand, "and trust me I am sincere in wishing you better fortune."

He then stepped into the tent, as if to ascertain that nothing belonging to his companions had been left behind, but really for the purpose of depositing his purse where Clifford would find it. This accomplished, he sprung on his

horse with precipitation, to guard against his object being frustrated by premature discovery. Pronouncing the word, "farewell," he darted into the road, and soon overtook Ferdinand and Mariana.

## CHAP. V.

—— His greedy eye admires  
The more than human beauty of her face.

CHALKHILL

**T**HE travellers proceeded at a moderate pace, and speedily left many who had departed from Canterbury on the preceding evening behind them. Some of these were unable to advance from the state of intoxication into which they had fallen, others from fatigue were obliged to halt in the road till their wearied limbs should be rested, and many who by their piety or their intemperance had completely drained their purses were too weak from want of sustenance to continue their journey, and their only hope of being enabled to reach their homes depended on the benevolence of those

who might meet with them, or overtake them by the way.

Ferdinand gazed on these deplorable objects with mingled pity and contempt. It was with infinite surprise that he beheld the long, the almost endless train of pilgrims to the tomb of St. Thomas of Canterbury. Though aware that the king of England by his zeal for the church had gained from the Pope the distinction of "Defender of the faith," he had understood that the writings of Luther had produced too great a tendency to heresy among the common people, to make it likely that such considerable numbers should unite in honour of a religious celebration, connected with the ancient usages of the established church. Edmund had wished to see his companions amazed, but by no means desired to effect this by such a display as the miserable appearance and dissipated conduct of the travellers they were

mixed with presented to their observation.

Edmund's acquaintance with Ferdinand was of no very ancient date. He had been sent to Spain in the suite of the English ambassador. Returning, he was attacked by banditti in the passes of the Pyrenees, and his life was on the point of being sacrificed, when he was rescued from danger by the intrepid and unexpected attack made by Ferdinand on the robbers. They, from the tone of authority in which, though unattended but by Mariana, he ordered others to advance, supposed him to be at the head of a military force. Edmund learned with pleasure that the destination of his deliverer was the same as his own, and they thenceforward travelled together.

On their way, Edmund learned that his companions were not natives of Spain nor of England, though they spoke the language of each country with ease and fluency. The complexion of Ferdinand



had a deeper tint than is commonly seen in that of an European. He was reserved, and somewhat abrupt when questioned about the place of his birth, and was evidently unwilling to speak on that subject.

Edmund admired the person of Mariana from the first moment he beheld her, and her attractions had increased every day which he had subsequently passed in her society. When he learned that she was shortly to become the inmate of an English convent, his admiration was associated with pity and regret. Hope that this might be averted, fear that it could not, invaded his bosom and soon produced that restless, pleasing, painful confusion in his mind which is called love.

He endeavoured to persuade Ferdinand to change his purpose, but all Edmund's arguments were unsuccessful. In vain did he urge that it appeared not only lamentable, but even sinful, to consign such worth and beauty to the

gloomy walls of a nunnery. The cold and tranquil reply of Ferdinand was equally prompt and simple, that the more virtuous and lovely the female so destined, the more worthy was she of her fate, for it would be too much to contend that such should be kept in the world, and that those who were not valued there, the depraved and the ugly, were good enough for God.

All that Edmund gained by reasoning with Ferdinand on this subject, was a promise that he would not carry his design into execution immediately on his arrival in England. Ferdinand however took especial care to advertise Edmund, that he did not make this promise from the slightest change in his determination, but merely because he felt that it would be desirable to make some enquiries to guide his judgment in the selection of a convent.

But it was a relief to Edmund on any terms to gain a respite for the devoted

fair one. His parents had died when he was an infant, and Lord Erpingham, who, as his guardian and the friend of his father, had proved himself ever anxious for his welfare, he doubted not would easily be induced to give his sanction to that union without which he could never be happy. He therefore persuaded himself, that by gaining time in the first instance he should pave the way for making such an appeal to the feelings and the understanding of Ferdinand as would eventually prevail on him to abandon his design for ever.

The conversations which he had held with Mariana on their journey, when Ferdinand was not present, augmented his anxiety on this subject. Though meekly resigned, he found that she shrunk with terror from the contemplation of those vows which were speedily to separate her from the world. The lively interest which Edmund took in her fate, the tender assiduities which she remarked, to say

nothing of his countenance or figure, made so strong an impression on her imagination, that, by the period down to which this narrative has been brought, she felt that, submitting now to take the vows of a nun, she would be destined to mourn the absence of one not previously included among the friends from which it would be affliction to part.

Their journey was not a cheerful one. A variety of cares oppressed the heart of Ferdinand, which frequently caused him to be silent for hours. During these fits of abstraction Edmund and Mariana sometimes stole a look at each other, while sadly musing on that event, which the latter held to be inevitable, which the former was afflicted to consider probable, they feared the glances in which they now indulged were among the last that they could be permitted to exchange.

On the evening of the second day after their departure from Canterbury they reached London. As they crossed

the bridge Edmund failed not to make his companions take notice of that ancient structure.

“ Seldom,” he remarked, “ will you behold a work, raised by the hands of man, that shall be at once so magnificent and so durable. Hardly can you believe that the covered street through which we are passing is a bridge, formed of stone, and crossing the river of Thames. Yet such do I avouch it is, and of this shall you have demonstration anon by seeing the water between the houses.”

He stopped, while he spoke, opposite the entrance of a narrow passage which separated two shops. At the further extremity there were iron pallisades, and through the spaces dividing them the river was visible.

“ This noble building, which is justly the pride of our nation,” said Edmund, “ has already endured for centuries. And notwithstanding it sustains these tall houses, the height of which you cannot

comprehend till we shall be fairly off the bridge itself, and that spacious chapel which you now behold, it is not doubted but it will endure through centuries to come."

They proceeded through the narrow road which then existed between the shops established on each side, and under the chambers of the houses belonging to them, which covered in the way, with the exception of certain spaces left to admit light and air.

Ferdinand and Mariana did not disguise their admiration of the opulence and splendour of the capital of England, to which they were now introduced. The streets were narrow, and the houses, which were principally built of wood with plaister, and crossed and divided by enormous oaken beams, projected over the pathway. Each story of every house was more prominent than that beneath, so that where the buildings were lofty, and the street but moderately wide, the attics

nearly met. At all events they approached so close to each other, that persons in the garrets of two opposite houses might converse without having the least occasion to speak unusually loud. This mode of building was no temporary fashion. It was adhered to for ages, and on account of the variable climate, was thought necessary for the public good, as the shelter houses thus formed were calculated to afford to those who were not their inhabitants against sudden storms of rain, so fatal to modern finery, more than atoned for anything clumsy in their appearance. Decoration, however, was not disregarded in their construction. The cross-beams were made black, and the brackets, which sustained the advance of each floor, were generally decorated with images of angels, some of which were accommodated with singularly elegant wigs. These images, when newly painted, presented a rosy-cheeked group of guardian

cherubims, which, though a little *outré*, might make some of the wigged and *painted* angels of modern date turn pale with envy.

Edmund and his companions took their way through Cornhill, and after he had directed their attention to the remains of the prison called from its shape, *The Tun*, which stood in that street, but which had been suffered to go to decay, they passed to Cheapside, where they found the inhabitants in much confusion and alarm, in consequence of a fire having broken out in a mercer's house, which occupied the scite of the old *Crownsilde*, or stone building, erected in earlier times for the accommodation of persons of distinction, who wished to witness the pageants of the city. The house on fire stood close to Bow Church, on the eastern side. A strong westerly breeze threatened to extend the calamity to the neighbouring



houses. Fire-engines, such as we now see, were then unknown, and the substitutes for them which were used to oppose a spreading conflagration it is not easy to mention with gravity. The only way by which water could be opposed to the devouring element, at least the only improvement on the obvious mode of throwing it from common household vessels, was by *squirting* it from *syringes*. \* These were of different sizes. The hand-syringe was about five feet long, and could throw water eighteen or twenty feet from the ground. A larger machine of the same kind was hung on wheels, and could be elevated or de-

\* Since the above was written this ancient invention has been revived. A "patent syringe" for opposing conflagration was exhibited in connection with the last Smithfield cattle show, and from the force and precision with which water could be conveyed through it to a particular spot, it seemed likely to be found of considerable importance in the absence of more potent means.

pressed at pleasure. This raised a more considerable body of water, when properly filled, than could be lifted by any other means. But the difficulty and delay which occurred in charging it from buckets, and the frequent miscarriages from the awkwardness of the men employed about it, several of whom were necessary, made it utterly useless where the flames had once burst forth with violence, but it sometimes prevented mischief where the fire was slow in breaking out, and was therefore thought a most valuable invention by our ancestors. Several persons were using these instruments with much useless diligence, and the crowd collected round, so obstructed the road, that Edmund found it necessary to alter his route. He accordingly turned back to the opening which they last passed on their right hand. This was St. Lawrence Lane, and it now struck him that he could not be-

stow his companions better than at *The Blossoms* inn. Thither he accordingly conducted them. The sign of St. Lawrence projected from the building, and the effigy of the saint was surrounded with a representation of the blossoms supposed to have flourished on the spot where he received the crown of martyrdom. To these the inn in question stood indebted for the name by which it then was generally known, and which, at this day, survives the memory of the saint, so far as the inn is concerned.

At the Blossoms, on Edmund's recommendation, Ferdinand resolved to rest for the night. But Edmund thought it his duty to deny himself the gratification of remaining there also. He was charged with letters to Lord Erpingham, which he had promised to deliver on his arrival in London before he slept. His lordship's residence was in Fickett's-fields, and Edmund having seen his travelling

companions satisfactorily accommodated, took leave for the evening. He passed to the end of the lane, and turning to the left to Wood-street, went through Aldersgate, and thence by Little Britain, and Smithfield, to Holborn Bars. Fickett's-fields lay at the back of the Fleet-street end of Chancery-lane, and near the gate of Lincoln's-inn; several houses, the predecessors of those which now form a part of the east side of Bell-yard, were then but newly built. The place, as may be suspected from the name which it bore, was *widely* different from what it is at present. The house of Lord Erpingham had a meadow immediately before it, beyond which Drury House appeared. Looking over the garden of Lincoln's-inn it commanded a view of Cup-field, now Lincoln's-inn-fields, and part of Holborn. To the left the houses and spacious gardens of the Strand were seen.

Edmund had the good fortune to find

that Lord Erpingham had not yet retired for the night, though the clock had struck nine. He was instantly admitted to the presence of the peer, who congratulated him most cordially on his arrival in Fickett's-fields.

## CHAP. VI.

Fortune seems only to have her eye-sight  
To behold my tragedy. WEBSTER.

LORD Erpingham had passed the prime of life. He had been much abroad in his younger days, and, from the knowledge which he had acquired, had been much courted by those who were in power in the early part of king Henry's reign. Even the haughty Wolsey had not disdained, notwithstanding the disparity of their years, to be guided in some instances by his advice. The fate of that extraordinary man, and the fall of Sir Thomas More, his lordship's particular friend, while they opened to him a prospect of gaining higher honours than had as yet requited him, relieved him from all anxiety to gain political distinction, if he had ever known it; and he calmly saw

from his retirement bolder aspirants contend for that favour from the monarch, which had in various instances proved so fatal to those who had had the good, or rather the evil fortune to gain it, without any wish to rival them. But though not in office, he laboured incessantly for the good of the state, and for that of mankind in general. If the common gaieties of life had but little attraction for him, his establishment was not a small one, and the studies in which he engaged, and the enquiries to the prosecution of which he applied himself, caused him to employ, in addition to his ordinary domestics, a larger number of clerks than was commonly retained by any nobleman not officially connected with the government.

This peculiarity attracted notice. At first it was considered as the means by which Lord Erpingham designed, at some future period, to prove to the king his superiority in knowledge over those en-

trusted with the administration of the country. But when it was seen, that he persevered in the same course through a series of years, neglecting to avail himself of opportunities which presented themselves for advancing such views, and willingly communicating to others what had been acquired by himself in extended and laborious investigations, the public generally recognized at last that very extraordinary character—a man who labours to deserve the gratitude of his countrymen rather than to gain their applause.

There were some, and it must be added that many who were best acquainted with his lordship's habits were among the number, who had taken up the idea, that the manner in which he occupied himself was not entirely the result of patriotism. They suspected that a secret sorrow preyed upon his heart, which it was his object to dissipate, or in some degree shake off, by the mental exercise which he courted. This opinion derived plau-



sibility from the uniform gravity, not to say the solemnity of his lordship's deportment, but it was not easy to determine whether this was the cause of his studies, or grew out of them as their natural effect.

If grief were familiar with Lord Erpingham, it was not accompanied with that impatience and irritation which in weak minds are commonly its offspring. Though a stranger to mirth he was courteous ; though he despised ostentation he was hospitable ; and though the prying might complain that he was too reserved, it was impossible even for them to deny that he was mild and benevolent to all.

Such had Edmund ever found the protector of his early youth. The unbending dignity which Lord Erpingham preserved had taught him to approach with some degree of awe ; but it was not that which dread of harshness might inspire, but solely that which was dictated by reverence for the virtues which adorned his

character, and the talents and boundless information which he was reputed to possess.

He met, as already has been stated, with a most cordial reception. His lordship listened with eager attention to his recital of what he had seen in his travels, and manifested the strongest interest in all that regarded Edmund personally. The timely succour which Edmund had received from Ferdinand called forth admiration for the brave foreigner; but he seemed a little surprised at the warm panegyric which Edmund went on to pronounce, on the subject of the amiable qualities and superb beauty of Mariana.

“You speak of beauty, young man,” said he, “with all that romantic ardour which at your time of life it is fitted to inspire. I have now to communicate to you what it interests you not a little to know, and which cannot be other than gratifying to one of your temperament. Although

I have ever discountenanced that impetuous pursuit of personal attractions, reckless of consequences, in which young men are but too often tempted to engage, while looking to other objects, it gave me pleasure to be enabled to secure you a wife, whose beauty is beyond compare, and whose approved virtue is not less entitled to admiration."

This unexpected intimation afforded Edmund more surprise than pleasure. From the manner in which this intelligence had been imparted, it was quite clear, that Lord Erpingham felt assured that it would gratify ; but Edmund was too much confounded to be able to attempt reply. His lordship proceeded.

" I see the grateful intelligence is the more felt from the circumstance of its being at this season wholly unexpected. But you shall be more rejoiced when you learn to whom you have been sold.

" My lord !" exclaimed Edmund, breathless with amazement.

" I say," repeated his lordship, " you

will the more rejoice (so at least I hope), when you shall know with whom this matter has been transacted, and happily advanced so far that I have actually *sold* you to the party."

The surprise of Edmund was at its height. It was not the word "*sold*," which now appears strange when applied to a matrimonial arrangement, that astonished him, but he was struck to hear that such a business was in progress, and so far advanced to completion. At that period, though very great refinement was affected in many things, our language had not attained the finish which it has since received, and a very awkward practice, derived from earlier ages, still existed, that of calling things by their real names. The delicate circumlocution adopted by modern taste was as yet not valued. The number of matrimonial *sales* effected in our time is as great as at any former date; but from the superior phraseology employed, we hear of nobody being *sold*.

The confusion, and indeed the agitation of Edmund did not escape Lord Erpingham ; but he was nothing disconcerted by it, as he was fully convinced, that he possessed the means of dismissing all uneasiness, and he serenely continued.

“ Remember you not the beautiful Elinor Brandon, the daughter of Sir Geoffrey Brandon — ”

“ I do remember her right well, and I also remember — ”

“ That I once chid you for looking on her as you did, and for following her, as it seemed to me, too anxiously.”

“ Even so. You then told me, that I must think of her no more, as she was destined to be the wife of — ” Edmund paused. Recollection of a recent unexpected meeting came over him, and embarrassed his speech. He endeavoured to break through it, and said, “ You told me, my lord, that she was to be the wife of another.”

“ True. All was arranged, and it was

my expectation, ere this, to see her bless with her hand my nephew Clifford. But he has unhappily forgotten those principles with which I sought to store his mind in infancy. Not to dwell on a subject so painful, he proved himself unworthy of her, and I, knowing your mind, have placed your name where his had previously stood."

He then produced a legal instrument, which began as follows :

" This indenture made the fourth daye of Apryll, yn the ——— yere of o<sup>r</sup> Soueraigne Lorde Kyng Henry the viijth, the William Lord Erpingham of the oon partie, and Sir Geoffry Brandon, knight, esquier for the body of o<sup>r</sup> saide Soueraigne Lord the Kyng, and son and herre of Sir Thomas Brandon discessed, of the other partie : witnessith, that the saide Lord William Erpingham hath bargayned, solde and graunted, and by these presents bargayneth, selleth and grauntith to the saide Sir Geoffrey, the ward, custodie, and

and maryage of the bodie of Edmund, son and herre of Henry Sherborn dis-  
cessed, to thentente only that he the  
saide Edmund shall marye and take to  
his wyfe oon of the two daughters of the  
saide Geoffrey, that is to say, Elinor and  
Mary ; that is to wyte, such one of them as  
the said Edmund shall thereunto appoynte  
and chouse : the said appointment and  
choyse to be made by the said Edmund  
Sherborn on this side the feaste of Easter  
next comyng ; yf the said Elinor or Mary,  
or either of the ym, to the said maryage  
wyll assente."

When Edmund had read thus far,  
Lord Erpingham, who had evidently anti-  
cipated some exclamation of delight,  
again broke silence.

" Judged I not aright? Did I not  
venture well in thus procuring your  
name to be inserted in place of that of  
the unworthy Clifford?"

" In this, as in all other instances, I  
am much indebted to your lordship. But

I must add, that from the period when you admonished me, I endeavoured to turn my thoughts wholly from the fair Elinor. An absence of three years, added to a sense of duty, has enabled me to succeed so completely, that, believe me, I feel more grief for Clifford's miscarriage than I know how to express. It is indeed so great, that my heart owns none of that joy, which tidings like those now communicated would once have inspired."

" But your delight will be great when you shall see Elinor, for she, I know, is the daughter on whom your attention rested, though, to guard against the possibility of mistake, I judged it wise to have the names of the two sisters inserted in the instrument. Her beauty has now gained a perfection of which, bright as her attractions were formerly, they gave but imperfect promise. This I have heard from others, not having seen her myself past a year, she having preferred



retirement, evincing thereby a becoming and discreet taste, which you will not fail to approve."

" I question not her perfection, but — "

" But you still regret the loss your former companion must sustain. This is not uncommendable in you, but bootless must it be to think of that."

" I know it, my lord. He cannot now aspire to the Lady Elinor, seeing he is already married to another."

" How know you that ? Have you seen him of late ?"

" Being asked the question, my answer must be 'yes ;' but for particulars, I pray your lordship spare me."

" Resolve me one thing. Did he speak to you of the crime which has cast him out from the bosom of that society in which he was born ?"

" He told me of his sufferings."

" And concealed their cause."

" Not so — at least, I cannot say so.

He named to me the charges preferred against him, but owned no guilt."

" I am sad to hear it. Trust me, it was my hope that one of my blood would not long retain the hardened front which he displayed on trial, when his criminality was established to the satisfaction of all good men — to my deep affliction."

" He told me of his conviction ; but he also told me, that it was procured by foulest perjury."

" Base and impenitent as he has been found, I should have expected that with you he would have been sufficiently ingenuous to lay aside dissimulation. But alas! become familiar with iniquity he will not abstain from it for a moment, even where its exercise may answer no purpose."

" Pardon me, my lord, but I must doubt the correctness of this conclusion. He spoke with an earnestness which I would fain believe marked sincerity."

" The hypocrite ! Such carriage costs

him little effort. When you shall know the evidence which was brought against him, and know with what unblushing effrontery he imputed the most fearful perjuries to men of holy life, you will better understand how to appreciate his words."

" I cannot but hope that you will find, that in this single instance you have been deceived."

" Edmund, I think I have had more opportunities of seeing men than many, and am not less capable of judging of their motives than others. It is probable that I flatter myself, but the world, I believe, share this opinion."

" Most assuredly."

" Yet if I, so skilled, could own the condemnation of my own nephew just — if I could believe one for whom, you know, I had ever been accustomed to interest myself, who was indeed most dear—I say, if I could be convinced that

he was guilty of the crime imputed to him, think you that his *dictum*, degraded as he now is, ought to weigh against the testimony of better men, and all the circumstances of judicial proof."

"It is hard to judge."

"It will not be so long. When you shall know the circumstances, and, above all, when you shall know the character of him whom Clifford aspersed, you will not fail to come to that conclusion, which, God my Saviour knows, I most reluctantly arrived at."

"You speak of the abbot of Leadenhall."

"The same. He was one of the monks of Mount Sinai, and resided on the spot. It was on my invitation that he came to England, and accepted that dignity which he now enjoys. I should confess that it was with a view to my own solace that I brought him hither; for while in the east, his spiritual

advice had much advantaged me. You shall shortly know him, and then for Clifford, all you can do, will be to join with me in supplicating the Most High to turn him from his evil doings, since to doubt his past villany will be impossible."

## CHAP. VII.

Far other scenes must soon present my sight,  
That lie deep buried yet in tenfold night.

FALCONER.

EDMUND felt more disturbed by the communication made to him respecting Elinor Brandon than he chose to acknowledge. Her beauty, though he considered it great, had made but a momentary impression. Having no hope of gaining her affections, he had ceased to think of her, and now, when her name was mentioned to him, far from waking those transports which Lord Erpingham had supposed it would call forth, he only remembered that he had once thought Elinor beautiful, while the passion which he had conceived for Mariana grew stronger, as the prospect of gaining her seemed more decidedly closed.

Kind as he had ever known Lord Erpingham, he wanted resolution to tell that the beauty he once admired, while Elinor was the intended bride of another, now that she was destined for him, he no longer desired to obtain. He could not doubt but his lordship would feel much hurt to find the efforts made to promote his happiness thus requited; nor could he expect that a nobleman of his years and prudence would listen with patience to any proposition for breaking his engagements with a young lady of fortune, in order to enable Edmund to solicit the hand of a female he had known but a few weeks, and with whose connections he was wholly unacquainted.

Edmund, when calmly considering the subject, had felt that, under the most favourable circumstances, the mention of such an idea would be likely to startle his lordship; but the difficulty was immeasurably increased by the step which had been taken in his absence.

Yet he flattered himself that a knowledge of Mariana, would do something towards inclining Lord Erpingham to consider if it were possible to give up the projected match with the Brandon family. He was therefore anxious that she, with her brother, should accept of an invitation with which he had been charged by his lordship. But Ferdinand declined accepting it till the business which brought him to England, so far as his niece was concerned, could be arranged. In pursuance of this object, his days were occupied in inquiring for the convents judged to be the best regulated, and in ascertaining the rules by which they were governed.

It was in vain that Edmund pressed him to allow himself repose but for a single day. Ferdinand peremptorily refused. The more pressing Edmund became for him to accept the invitation of Lord Erpingham, the more determined was Ferdinand to refuse. Edmund hoped,



from taking her to his lordship, that the plan of shutting her up in a convent might be abandoned. Ferdinand feared that from letting her see the splendid varieties which opulence might be prepared to set before them, it would become more painful, if not more difficult, to carry it into effect.

In conversation, Ferdinand did not conceal from Edmund that one motive for placing Mariana in a convent with little delay, sprung from an apprehension that the state of his funds would make it necessary, at no distant period, for him to return to Spain, unless he should find employment in England. Edmund expressed his conviction, that, possessing as he did, the Spanish and several other languages, there would be no difficulty in turning his abilities to account in England. On this subject he proposed to make some inquiries. Ferdinand thanked him, but expressed little solicitude about the result.

“Mariana disposed of,” said he, “my wants will probably not affect me long.”

It was his wish to avoid all public spectacles. But one day, being at Mile End, where a grand display of archery was to take place, and not having Mariana with him, he was induced to pause for a short time, to witness an exhibition which the king himself did not think it beneath him to attend.

Edmund had accompanied Ferdinand on this occasion. He failed not to apprize him of the several regulations which had been made to guard against any interruption of the sports by the inconvenient pressure of the crowd. He especially cautioned him against standing too forward when the word “Fast” should be given, as after that had been called aloud, no penal consequences would attach to wounding the spectator who neglected to withdraw, even though death should ensue. This was the will of the king, who considered the lives of

a few subjects had better be sacrificed than that the science of archery should be discouraged, by suffering those who practised it to be intruded upon with impunity.

A chair, elevated on a small platform and covered with crimson satin, had been placed for the king, of which his majesty now took possession. He wore, placed a little aslant, a black velvet bonnet circled with a silver band, and surmounted by a small plume of feathers. A blue cloak bordered with flowers worked in gold, and ornamented with a large cape of spotted fur, concealed the remainder of his dress. Henry's eyes glistened with mirth while he gave command that the sports should begin, and ordered the yeomen in his train to assist the archers who were clearing the ground.

While this work was in progress, a person with a very consequential air, but attired in a soiled leathern doublet, made his appearance. He wore a bonnet of

coarse cloth, ornamented with a gilded button. The lower part of his dress was of cloth, including his stockings, or the substitutes for stockings, which were appendages to what a polite writer must name inexpressibles.

As this individual bustled by, calling out in an authoritative tone for those to retire who "had no humour to taste the point of an arrow," Ferdinand, surprised at the contrast between the humility of his dress and the loftiness of his deportment, desired to know the rank of so singular a character.

"He is called a duke," Edmund replied. "You are surprised to find that his exterior so little accords with that of a Spanish duke."

"Making all allowances for the varying customs of different nations, I confess myself amazed."

"And justly, but I must explain; this fellow is not of our nobility, but a mere citizen, a bowyer by trade. He, on a

former occasion, so distinguished himself in the exercise of archery, that the king being present, and in merry mood, for the shooting was in honour of his third marriage, and within a week of the beheading of Queen Ann, he I say, being then exhilarated, did dub this same fellow *Duke of Shoreditch*."

" A singular promotion."

" A jocular burlesque on one ; but the man, his name is Barlow, took it seriously, and holds himself, from this circumstance, a personage of no small importance, and as I hear, his shop in Shoreditch (which, being in the fields, is but a thinly peopled parish) is fast falling to decay."

" His greatness then, as in other cases it often chances, is like to be his ruin."

" Even so, but this mockery has called forth others who would fain be regarded as of the same class of nobles. The Marquis of Clerkenwell, with the Earls of Hoxton (or Hogsden, as it is commonly

named), of Pancras and of Shacklewèll, will be here anon."

While he was yet speaking, several of these gentry made their appearance. They passed to the stand, their horns sounded, and every thing announced that the sports were forthwith to commence.

"Would you see our real nobility," said Edmund, "look on those who stand on either hand of the king. That elderly peer, to whom his majesty now speaks, and who is pointing to Barlow, is the Duke of Norfolk. Near him, on the right in the brown velvet cloak, stands his son the Earl of Surrey."

Ferdinand looked on these, and suddenly started, while with breathless agitation he inquired, "And who — who stands next to that young nobleman?"

"On the right?"

"No, on the left, a little in advance. He who is attired in black, with a long white beard."

"That is my excellent friend, Lord Erpingham."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Ferdinand, shrinking as it were within himself while he spoke, and looking stedfastly on Edmund.

The latter was struck with the manner of Ferdinand.

"What moves you thus?" he demanded.

"I—I—I did not expect to see *him* here."

"Doubtless you have heard that he is little wont to frequent public spectacles; but in scenes like these he takes much interest, for he apprehends (the fear seems to me a vain one), that if archery be not especially protected, the use of the musket will, in time, cause the bow and arrow to fall wholly into disuse."

"Is it even so?" Ferdinand muttered in a tone which left it doubtful whether he intended to address another or was talking to himself. Edmund hesitated

for a moment, but assuming that the question had been put to him, he proceeded.

“ I, for my own part, though extravagance can rarely be imputed to Lord Erpingham, hold his dread in this instance to be wholly chimerical. The rage for musketry will, I doubt not, prove but a fashion, and to my thinking, its day has already nearly passed away.”

“ Fast,” roared a voice of stentorian power.

The well known sound was repeated by hundreds of tongues on every side, and a general movement backward took place, accompanied by some little contention. Those who had occupied the forbidden spot were anxious that their neighbours who had not come too forward, should give way, so that they, without breaking the line to be kept for the archers, might still be in front. This was not readily acquiesced in by the persons who were already at the most ad-



vanced point. They were disposed to let the others pass behind them, but would not consent to retreat themselves. Edmund stepped back as it were instinctively, and expected Ferdinand would do the same ; but he, wholly unmindful of what he had been told, remained where he had previously stood. Edmund called to him, but in the confusion which came over him, instead of retiring, Ferdinand went several paces forward. The clamour of the multitude warned him of his danger, but too late ; for the first arrow took its flight at the moment he stepped from the side, and was already fixed in his shoulder.

Great disorder followed. The shooting was suspended, and the spectators again occupied that ground from which they had so lately been excluded. The Earl of Surrey and Lord Erpingham hastened to the wounded man. Ferdinand thanked the former for his attention ; but when Lord Erpingham told

him that assistance should be forthwith procured, he snatched the arrow from his flesh, and turned away abruptly.

Edmund withdrew with Ferdinand, saw his wound dressed, and attended him to his home, which was at the house of a merchant in Gutter, or as it was then called Gouter-lane, to whom he had been furnished with an introduction. On their way he noticed the manner in which Ferdinand had received the attentions of Lord Erpingham, and regretted that he had not made a more suitable return.

His answer was equivocal—"I regret," said he "that it was not in my power."

Edmund supposed him to be sorry that pain had made him forget his customary regard for courtesy, and expressed an opinion, that what he must have endured might well account for that which, under other circumstances, would appear extraordinary.

"I spoke not of pain; I felt none,"

said Ferdinand. "But let us discourse no more on this subject. My wound is slight, and merits not attention even from me. In a day or two it will be healed."

The injury he had sustained was inconsiderable. He soon resumed his inquiries respecting the religious establishments of England. That of St. Helen, or Elene, in Bishopsgate, seemed to him preferable to the others with which he had become acquainted. Report, however, spoke favourably of a small convent at Shene, and he therefore made a point of visiting that place before he came to a final decision. The information he obtained there did not produce any impression unfavourable to the pretensions of the sisterhood of Saint Helen. While at Shene, he paused for a moment to look at the royal palace, which then existed on that delightful spot. Mariana, who had accompanied him thither, viewed, with unspeakable admiration, the beauties of the captivating scene. She gazed

alternately with unwearied eyes, now on the matchless work of nature's embellishing hand, and now on the ingenious efforts which art and labour had made to decorate the grounds adjoining the palace. They skirted the gardens, and coming to a place where a running stream parted them from a hedge, fantastically trained, so as to exhibit the objects it defended, in situations the most pleasingly picturesque.

Mariana looked with wonder and delight, but her pleasure was of brief duration. She recollected how soon she was to be withdrawn from the contemplation of objects like those which charmed her, and a thrill of agony ran through her delicate frame, which was nothing diminished by the consciousness that it had not escaped the observation of Ferdinand, whose lowering eye already reproved her wandering.

## CHAP. VIII.

Through life's sad journey, hopeless to complain,  
Can sacred justice these events ordain ?  
But, O my soul ! avoid that wondrous maze,  
Where reason lost in endless error strays.  
As through this thorny vale of life we run,  
Great Cause of all effects, Thy will be done.

FALCONER.

“ I NOTE,” said Ferdinand, “ and I must confess it, I have done so with pain, that your eyes sparkle with transport while you gaze on this fair prospect. It is not my object to rebuke, yet I cannot choose but regret that such is your frame of mind.”

“ And why, permit me to inquire ? Think you a scene so enchantingly gay was not fashioned to glad those who were created to people it.”

“ Yes, Mariana ; but you are not of them. I have said I would not reprehend you, for I know that when heaven shines

in cloudless majesty, the clear transparent wave will copy its gayest hue, and your mind, as yet transparent as that same wave, and ready to reflect back every object in its brightest colours, might well be expected to throw that mingled joy and sorrow into your countenance, which you have neither art nor guile enough to conceal.—But let me conjure you to detach your mind from such scenes. Other images should occupy your contemplation. I would know your thoughts fixed on that hallowed gloom which awaits you in the bosom of the convent you are shortly to enter. The sacred thoughts which shall there ever be present to the pious imagination, will more than compensate for the loss of such glittering trifles as now court the view, and holy hope will shed over the most sombre moments of a cloistered life, a portion of the radiance of the blissful eternity to which it leads.”

Mariana was silent. But her eyes dwelt on the beautifully diversified pros-

pect with a melancholy air, and with a fondly eager gaze, which seemed at once anxious and reluctant to bid them an everlasting farewell. The reflection that her charmed sense might rest on such a picture no more, caused a tear to tremble on her eyelid. Ferdinand remarked it, and while a sympathising pang invaded his own bosom, he made a new effort by argument to diminish the affliction of his niece.

“ This is weakness, Mariana. Reason and religion should unite to expel from your heart the treacherous foe to its repose, which seeking to wed your affections to earthly pleasure, would bereave you of your eternal inheritance.”

“ Forgive me,” sighed Mariana, attempting, but in vain, to repress the sob which agitated her bosom.

While she spoke a butterfly flitted by them, of that species which modern naturalists have denominated *the peacock*. Its beautifully variegated wings rivetted the

attention of both, while, having passed the water which divided them from the hedge, they saw it sportively bound from flower to flower, and at length pause to bask at its ease, and to display, luxuriously reposing in the bosom of a newly blown rose, its minute but splendid plumage to the noon-day sun.

“Behold,” said Mariana, “how that unreasoning insect gives himself up to unrestricted enjoyment of the banquet which Nature’s liberal hand has spread before him. Is it sin in him to be happy? —O! no, my uncle will not tell me that; nor will he say that heaven meant to deny to its more important productions the bliss conferred on this poor slave of instinct.”

Ferdinand was embarrassed. He however replied, “His all of happiness is here. We have to look forward to another life.”

“And why should it be assumed that our welfare in another state will be pro-



moted by rejecting the proffered bounty of the Creator in this ?—Why should we deny ourselves the guiltless enjoyment of the pure air ; of the light of heaven ; and the decorated surface of the earth ?”

Ferdinand seemed disposed to answer the objection, but found himself at a loss for words. Musing on what Mariana had just said, his eye steadily pursued the course of the insect they had observed, which continued to woo, in succession, the most distinguished ornaments of the *parterre*. He suffered his whole observation to appear to rest on it, that he might conceal from Mariana the embarrassment he experienced. On a sudden he saw the butterfly impeded in its flight, and perceived in the next moment that it was entangled in the web of a spider. Its desperate struggles to escape shook every thread of the fatal snare, the texture of which, however, was too strong to be broken by them, and the spider was seen to dart on his helpless

victim. The butterfly perished in the embrace of his tremendous enemy, and the spider having banquetted on his prize, threw round it a new web, the strings of which were drawn so tight, that the form of the dead fly was no longer preserved, and drawing it thus compressed to the upper part of his abode, he retired, to await the coming of a new prey.

Mariana wept the fate of the insect, and regretted that the interposing water had put it out of her power to prevent the spider from completing his triumph. Ferdinand saw she was affected, and resumed the conversation, by referring to the object which had just fallen under their observation.

“ Heaven has sent an argument to supply my lack of wit. But a few moments ago you gazed on the gay flutterer which glistened before us, with feelings of regret that you might not be permitted, like him, to rove at pleasure among the alluring beauties of nature. Do you see him now ?”

Mariana answered but by a sigh.

“ Where now is the happiness which lately you could envy ? Where the bright colours which commanded admiration ? Where the bounding joy which every motion indicated ? All are no more. The poor fly has been destroyed, and its remains, enveloped in a loathsome veil, rifled, discoloured, marred in every respect, present to the view but a shapeless offensive object in the web of the destroyer. Such are the consequences of being at liberty to rove at large in quest of pleasure.”

“ Aye, my dear uncle, to butterflies which roam where spiders are to be found. But this applies not to other beings. I am in no danger from spiders.”

“ True, Mariana, but you are likely to fall in the way of a more formidable, as well as a more odious destroyer. This spider is a poor artist, who has but used the means which nature gave him to procure sustenance. He has destroyed his

victim to nourish himself. But monsters are to be found, who, urged by no such imperious necessity, will destroy, for very sport, and hold the shipwreck of your hope to be the consummation of their triumph."

"But there are no monsters which can thus destroy men."

"Women are destroyed, and the destroyers are men. It is from these that I would preserve thine innocence. I but seek thy soul's health, when I withdraw thee from the world. Yielding to my wish, it is true, that thou must abandon some objects, which in youth it may be natural that thou shouldest wish to cherish; but for these thou shalt be more than compensated by being protected against those dangers which might blast thee in thy prime, and give thee an old age of vain remorse."

"I could only feel remorse from guilt. Is it because you think me depraved that you would place me in a convent?"

“ No, dearest, but because I know thee pure, and would preserve thee so. I would not leave thee exposed to the snares which treachery prepares. Thy inexperience, thy very virtue, would betray thee into the toils that crime would spread for thy unsuspecting feet. Alone, thou couldst not escape them.

“ Alone ! but why should I be left alone ? Cannot you, who have hitherto protected me, continue to be my protector ? ”

“ That is not certain. I may, and probably I shall, soon be withdrawn—withdrawn for ever.”

“ Withdrawn for ever ! What awful meaning lurks beneath your words ! Unwonted sadness sits upon your cheek. What has chanced ? Tell me, I pray, whence these sad forebodings.”

“ Mariana, we are strangers in a foreign land — a land which I have doubtless sought with much anxiety, but still in England we are, as I may say, alone.

What security is there against the precariousness of human life? The climate, and diseases incidental to it, may snatch me away in a few days, and is it not my duty to provide for the safety of the being confided to my care, if possible, before an event so probable shall take place?"

With a most stedfast gaze Mariana regarded him while he spoke. She saw in his whole manner an anxious desire to diminish the effect of the words which had previously escaped, and which had alarmed her; she could not help feeling persuaded that he had contemplated some danger more imminent and appalling than that of climate, or any arising from those accidents to which human beings, in the ordinary course of events, are exposed every where.

"There is something," she said, "which you would conceal from me. I tremble, but know not why. Let me not leave you, if you are exposed to peril."

“ Be calm, Mariana. There is no immediate peril; and if there were, could it be removed by your presence ?”

“ You wish to hold the language of comfort, but your tongue refuses obedience to your will. When you tell me that there is no immediate danger, I cannot but infer both that there is danger, and that it is not very remote. Part with me not under such circumstances.”

“ No more of this. I have solemn duties to perform. To these, my life is devoted, and it may be that I shall not long survive their fulfilment. To you, my cares are in the first instance directed. Withdrawn from the busy world, to Mariana it will matter little, in her holy retirement, whether I still live, or am released from the cares of existence. From the moment when you are received into that society of which you are to become a member, you will see me, and I trust, hear of me no more.”

The last words of Ferdinand inflicted

a shock on the feelings of Mariana for which she was not prepared. With imploring look, she exclaimed —

“ O! say not so. If I must resign the hope of ever seeing you again, when once I have taken the veil, much as I wish to submit with becoming resignation to that which you recommend, I know not how my lips can be taught to pronounce the vows, and feel that my heart can never be reconciled to the melancholy separation.”

“ Mariana, I have wished to watch over your interest as might become a father or a brother. Were it permitted, I could view you with a lover’s eye; but, at all events, I think you cannot doubt that your welfare is the object of my earnest solicitude, and pursuing it, I trust, I have never been unkind.”

“ Our separation will therefore be the more insupportable.”

“ It is inevitable. Fate wills it. I announce it with pain; but this, sad as it



is, I am decidedly of opinion will be less painful than the wretched alternative I could offer."

"Impossible! In this you must err. Let me still remain near you."

"Ask it not. Have I not told you of the danger?"

"I will brave it all."

"It may not be. This, Mariana, is, I fear, a return of your fond lingerings after the gaities of life."

"O no! I was thinking but of you; yet still must I confess that there is something terrific in being withdrawn from liberty, to pine through life encircled by the gloomy walls of a convent."

"I know it well, nor can I blame the regrets which I wish to subdue. But I have already intimated that we have but a choice of evils."

"What evils can exceed those in magnitude which she must deplore who sees herself withdrawn from all that she could prize in life, to pine in solitude?"

“Those,” answered Ferdinand, “which not merely afflict for a season, but which destroy. Look again on yonder fly, now so changed in appearance that you can scarce recognise it or believe that it is the same insect which recently claimed our admiration. Had it not been better for him that he should have remained in the shady retreat from which he issued, and thus escaped the snare which had been woven for him? Fiercer enemies, and more subtle snares, await you. You see them not; but were it well that I, who am aware of them, should weakly yield to your wishes to be near me, and thus expose you to annihilation?”

Mariana looked at the dead insect; she sighed deeply, but attempted no reply.

## CHAP. IX.

A behaviour so noble  
As gives a majesty to adversity :  
You may discern the shape of loveliness  
More perfect in her tears than in her smiles.

WEBSTER.

FERDINAND now considered that he had made sufficient inquiry into the state of religious societies in England, and that nothing remained but to carry his resolution into effect, and he accordingly required Mariana to prepare herself speedily to join the pious sisterhood of St. Helen.

Aware of his intentions, Edmund had on every occasion ventured to combat them, but no impression could be made on Ferdinand. He had sufficient to provide for her in the way he proposed, but

not enough, as he alleged, to establish her as he could desire in any other situation. Edmund made light of this objection, and hesitated not to declare that he should esteem himself the happiest of mortals if permitted to aspire to her hand, though unendowed with fortune and those common place advantages which others might deem of importance."

"I question not your sincerity, and your liberality demands my admiration. I know you would feel as you say ; but I know also that your imagination is filled with gay smiles, bright eyes, ruby lips, and all the other attributes of youth and loveliness. When these shall be dimmed, or when you, from becoming more familiar with them, shall not find them call forth all the extacy which they now inspire, then painful reflection will succeed to a transient dream of happiness, the reproaches of your friends for the imprudence of which you have been guilty will no longer be disregarded, and

you will lament that it was ever your lot to meet with me."

"And can you think that I would ever —"

"That you would ever be base? No; but I believe that you would be unhappy. That Mariana, from being deemed a blessing, would be viewed as an incumbrance."

"Never."

"I may not therefore encourage a passion, which, however pure, is not founded on reason. Could you persuade me that all whose opinions you regard concurred in approving those feelings which you avow, even then I must withhold my consent."

"Indeed! it must be, then, because I have failed to win your good opinion."

"Not so, by heaven!" cried Ferdinand, taking Edmund by the hand, while he trembled with emotion. "I esteem, I love you as a brother, and that esteem and love would, even in the case I have

supposed, dictate the course which I have announced it to be my purpose to pursue. Believe that I have spoken the truth, but ask not my reasons. I would spare you and Mariana pain, and having that object in view, I must be deaf to your entreaties."

"You have fears that I should find you burdensome, but these are idle."

"My objection springs not thence. But it is in vain to talk on this subject—no argument that man can use—no event that Fortune could accomplish, may change my resolution."

Edmund was distressed, but the double barrier opposed to his wishes—the engagements entered into by Lord Erpingham, and the fixed resolution of Ferdinand—united to annihilate hope. He was willing to believe that the former might be evaded by some means, but the latter presented a difficulty perfectly insuperable. What had fallen from Ferdinand, on the subject of his funds, had

led him to endeavour, without wounding his pride, to furnish the means of improving his condition. He flattered himself that he had done so with success ; and though, after what had just been stated, this did not promise a change in his determination, he now mentioned it, anxious to confer a benefit, though destroyed the expectation that it would contribute to the accomplishment of the object which most deeply interested himself.

“ Be assured of this, Ferdinand,” said Edmund, “ your fortunes will speedily improve. I was not deceived in thinking that your talents might be advantageously employed in England, and am already authorized to offer you two appointments.”

“ I am much beholden to your friendship. What are they ?”

“ The first is the situation of secretary to Lord Erpingham.”

“ Is it possible ! This is beyond my

- hope," and his eyes sparkled with unwonted fire while he spoke. "Tell me, will not such appointment give me admission to his house?"

"Most certainly. You will, moreover, be constantly with him in his closet, and you will be treated most confidentially. But a higher office is open for you, which will place you in immediate attendance on the king."

"Name it not; I have no ambition."

"You are wise. I would rather share the confidence of a nobleman so virtuous as Lord Erpingham, than hold a higher station."

"*Is* Lord Erpingham so virtuous?" inquired Ferdinand.

"Why that scrutinizing, doubting, look? Have you heard any one in England speak disparagingly of Lord Erpingham?"

"No."

"Or out of England?"

"I never heard the name till I came to this country?"



“ Why then that seeming doubt ? ”

“ The boldness of your speech might challenge it. But resolve me one thing ; was this virtuous lord ever in Mexico ? ”

“ In early life, he was there. He was one of the original followers of Cortes.”

“ It is the same ! ” Ferdinand exclaimed, speaking to himself.

“ Know you aught respecting his carriage while there ? ”

“ Nothing worthy your ear. And *I* may be his confidential assistant.”

“ If you prefer that to the higher situation ? ”

“ I would prefer it to a throne,” cried Ferdinand, with energy. “ But he is your friend. I must not accept the boon from you.”

Edmund supposed Ferdinand was unwilling to accept a benefit, after opposing his wishes with respect to Mariana, and hastened to assure him, that whatever might be his determination in other matters, it would gratify him to be the

means of administering to his comfort. Ferdinand seemed at first not to hear, but the sounds lingered on his ear, and he replied —

“ True. You are generous and sincere. Perhaps it is a vain qualm that disturbs me. I will tell you, anon, my determination.”

He spoke in a hurried manner, and retired while yet speaking, as if to conceal the emotion which he could not subdue.

The manner in which his intelligence had been received embarrassed Edmund not a little, but he had not time to muse on it, for Mariana now entered, and in her presence, he was conscious of but one feeling, affliction at the prospect of losing her.

She entered with a look of tranquil resignation, but her eyes were dimmed by sorrow, and a less attentive observer than Edmund might have discovered that she

had recently been in tears. He approached her with tenderness.

"Mariana," said he, "I derive a mournful satisfaction from seeing you once more, and alone."

"Alas!" she replied, "I share not your satisfaction. Thus to meet, only to pronounce an eternal adieu, inflicts a pang which both might well have been spared."

"Not so; for though denied to entertain the hope which I would fain have cherished, to see you even under such circumstances, is a luxury which I would not deny my charmed senses for all the earth affords. But much I grieve to say, my efforts to change the resolution of your uncle have all proved unavailing."

"I know he is not to be shaken. A sense of duty urges him on, and, satisfied that his decision is dictated by anxious love, I wish to bow to it without repining, but cannot without pain."

"All things conspire to cloud the

prospect which I fondly, foolishly trusted, would become so enchantingly bright on my arrival in England. Lord Erpingham acting most kindly, and believing that his doings would pleasure me, while I was from home bound me by indenture to wed another whose beauty in other days had won my boyish admiration."

Mariana could not repress a sudden throb at hearing this, but instantly recovering her firmness, she mildly replied,

"May you — may you be happy!"

"Not with her, Mariana," was the answer. "Come what may, if you are destined never to be mine, I will lead no other to the hymeneal altar."

The solemn resolution with which he announced this determination affected her; she faltered.

"Forget me, Edmund—forget me, and be happy."

"The advice is vain. No; since you are torn from my view to lead a cloistered life, though I may not be your companion,

I will share the same fate. Dismissed the gallant and aspiring projects which once warmed my heart, I give up all thoughts of earthly happiness, all dreams of fame. While you pass to a convent, I will to a monastery."

"To a monastery!"

"I have said it. The same exercises shall unceasingly unite us in thought, and the day may wear away less sadly from the idea, which every passing hour will suggest, that it has brought us nearer to that which shall admit our emancipated spirits to an everlasting union in a happier state of being. May I trust that you will share these feelings."

"O doubt it not! In this moment which must part us for ever, I forget my former reserve, and freely frankly promise, when I rise to matins, I will think of Edmund. Through the live-long day your name shall have a place in my prayers, be tenderly remembered in the even-song, and when the compline has

terminated the appointed duties of the day, my last thought shall dwell on you."

"Blest assurance! This shall sweeten penance, and lift my soul above all sense of pain. Remembering that through Mariana I became what I purpose to be, her image will unceasingly attend me, and still suggesting holier hope and higher wishes, to think on thee shall be religion."

Ferdinand entered.

"I am at length resolved," he said. "The situation which you offer, I will accept. Mariana will leave me immediately, and I shall be wholly at Lord Erpingham's service."

Edmund attempted to express satisfaction, but his eyes were rivetted on Mariana.

"I see," said Ferdinand, "how your minds are affected. You rightly anticipate, that from this hour you meet no more. To protract such an interview,

were but to lengthen pain, so let us hasten to separate."

He took Mariana by the hand, she required the support of his arm. As he sustained, he bent over her with a look of inexpressible tenderness. His eyes reddened, and it was only by a violent effort, which caused a convulsive distortion of his features for an instant, that he could refrain from tears.

"Trust me," said he, "my affliction is great, thus rudely to separate hearts formed to bless each other; but it may not be otherwise. You, Edmund, will one day own that I could not do otherwise. Sadness invades my bosom, but cannot change my purpose."

"Must we—must we part?" inquired Edmund.

"There is no alternative," Ferdinand replied, with much agitation. He added, in a tone of decisive firmness, "The decree is irrevocable."

CHAP. X.

Some strange presages in my mind forebode,  
The worst of mis'ries or the greatest good.

POMFRET.

EDMUND felt that to change the purpose of Ferdinand, even if the disgrace of Clifford had not induced Lord Erpingham to take the step on which he had ventured, was a task beyond his powers, and he retired in despair. His mind was, however fully made up in no case to become the husband of Lady Elinor. Hope was annihilated, and he now looked for no greater comfort on earth than that which he expected to realise, in devout seclusion from the world. He was concerned that it became necessary to subject Lord Erpingham to new disappointment, but, fixed to act on the resolution which he had announced to



Mariana, he resolved to communicate it without delay.

For this purpose he repaired to Fickett's fields. He found his friend, and with him the abbot of Mount Sinai, as the peer was accustomed to call Father Egbert. Though much occupied with his own concerns, Edmund started on learning that he saw the monk, who, according to Clifford, had degraded himself by acts of the most fearful depravity.

But in the appearance of Father Egbert there was nothing to indicate a dissolute life, or a malignant spirit. His countenance was free from wrinkles, but there was nevertheless a sufficient appearance of age to avert the idea that he was unqualified by years to hold the high situation which he filled. His complexion was rather pale, and even while conversing he appeared to be absorbed in contemplation. His large black eye had not that fiery lustre which seems to pierce the object it beholds; but where it rested

serenely observant, without any effort that could surprise or alarm, it read with facility the disposition, the mood, and almost the particular thoughts of the individual who attracted its attention.

“Behold,” said Lord Erpingham, “the venerable character whom the fallen and wretched man you have lately seen continues to asperse. This is the worthy and enlightened superior of the priests of the Trinity at Leadenhall. I would you had been here some hour or more ago, then should you have seen what would have carried conviction to your mind of that baseness, on the part of Clifford, which you could scarcely believe had existence.

“Has the holy father laid new proofs before your lordship?” Edmund inquired, in a tone of sadness which seemed to Lord Erpingham to border on the sarcastic, and he replied with much gravity—

“You seem incredulous still ; and the

manner of your question marks a suspicion which is most unfounded. The worthy father has brought me proof of his benign disposition, by bringing me no proofs of the guilt of his foe, though such, I know, were placed in his hands."

"I meant not to express suspicion of this holy person's virtue. But as good and wise men have often been deceived by conspiring circumstances, I would even now venture to hope that you may yet find cause to think Clifford less abandoned than he has lately appeared."

"Impossible! This very day has produced distressing evidence of his guilt, which had not previously reached me, and which, had it been possible for mercy to conceal it, would have been consigned to oblivion."

"Indeed!"

"I speak the truth; and sad I am at heart to own such knowledge of one whom I loved, and respecting whom I promised a dying sister that I ever would

regard him as my own. But this good man —”

“I pray, my lord,” interrupted the abbot, “let me not be named in terms of unmerited praise. Merely to abstain from crime is not virtue. Far from deserving to be lauded, I have failed in my duty. The Divine Author of our religion enjoined his followers to render good for evil. I have not done this, but have simply avoided returning evil for evil.”

The earnestness of the abbot’s manner, and the humility of his speech, were happily in unison with the character which Lord Erpingham had given of him, and Edmund felt the unfavourable sentiments which he had been led to entertain already diminished.

“I will not offend your modesty again,” said Lord Erpingham. “The narrative which I must recount will sufficiently honour you, without praise of mine. But the tale must be told to Edmund, for it much imports him to

know what has chanced. Prepare, young man, for disappointment."

"Your words provoke surprise my lord ; but, in truth, I am at present, as I may hereafter explain, in a situation which leaves me small ground for apprehension."

"Thus then, in brief, knowing your ardent character, immediately on your return I sent with all speed a letter to Sir Geoffrey Brandon, requesting him, for that you were arrived, forthwith to repair to London with his fair daughter. I received not that prompt reply which I expected, but to-day my old friend has been with me."

"I am sorry," said Edmund, "that I knew not of his coming. I could have have wished to state —"

"Hear me to the end. He came to me this day, and then I found that the delay which I had noted had been occasioned by Father Egbert."

"This I do not understand."

“Anon you will comprehend right well. That which has been my affliction is, alas! the cause of equal affliction to my friend. His daughter, that same Elinor whom you so admired — she, the intended partner of your life, has fallen to shame, and deserted her heart-broken, too indulgent parent.”

Lord Erpingham had now reached a point which waked the liveliest attention on the part of Edmund. Though he had previously despaired of altering the resolutions of Ferdinand, the sudden removal of one difficulty suggested a thought that the other might not prove insuperable. A gleam of hope broke in upon him, but it was blended with sincere sorrow for the amiable being (such he had considered Elinor), whose degradation had been thus unexpectedly announced.

“I have since your return,” (Lord Erpingham resumed) “told you of the passionate love of retirement which had taken possession of the young lady. This

now receives a mournful comment. She has been betrayed by that heartless wretch Clifford. She left her father four months ago. He concealed her flight, hoping to recall her to a sense of duty, but eventually he had the affliction to learn that she was associated with the most profligate and depraved of men ; and he, fickle and faithless as in all the rest, now treats her, so it is reported, with a degree of cruelty, which, though due to her folly, she merited not from him for whom she had sacrificed her home, her friends, her fame, her all."

" I am sad to hear the tidings ; but are they certainly true ?"

" They are. I received them from Sir Geoffrey, who spared no pains to inform himself of the situation of his once beloved child."

" I mentioned that I had seen one with Clifford, whom I considered to be his wife. She was young and lovely, but I recognised her not. It is true I saw her but

for a few moments, and her dress and situation were such, that —”

“ It might not be Elinor that you saw so recently. She has probably been discarded to make way for some other victim. Love changed to loathing, — Clifford even mocked the fair being he had destroyed, by counselling her, before one who carried it to her father, to leave him for ever, and return to those whom she has filled with anguish, and covered with dishonour.”

“ Verily, this seemeth past belief,” said the abbot, “ and this was one cause why I would not be the bearer of the tale which I was solicited to unfold.”

“ It does seem past belief,” Edmund repeated after the abbot, whose incredulity filled him with anxiety to atone for the unfavourable thoughts which he had harboured. “ I knew him,” he continued, “ while at school, to be wild and reckless. Deliberate cruelty I never thought a feature in his character.”



“ But the facts,” remarked his lordship, “ which have transpired, and which cannot be refuted, prove incontestibly, that there is no crime to the perpetration of which he is not equal. The melancholy tale, it is fit that I should add, Sir Geoffrey solicited this holy father to communicate. He refused to report aught that could make against Clifford, and kept his disgrace from my ears for several days. The injured father at length was compelled, through the virtuous reluctance of the abbot to speak sad truths of one who had calumniated him, to unburthen his mind to me himself.”

“ Though I despise the affectation of unnecessary humility,” said the abbot, “ yet, my lord, again I must complain when you praise me so unworthily. If Clifford sinned against me, has not the law, and yet more, the scorn of all good men, severely punished his offending. It evinces no extraordinary virtue, that I do not pursue a man thus fallen.”

These words were uttered with an air of manly sincerity, which satisfied Edmund that he spoke from his heart.

"I admire, holy sir," he said, "the sentiments which you have expressed, while I perfectly concur with what has fallen from his lordship."

"I am, I must confess, gratified to hear you say so. It is a happiness on which I did not calculate. Men who wish to act an upright part, from the dissimulation abroad in the world, are liable to be often mistaken. Blessed is he who feels that his heart can bear the all-searching glance of HIM, from whom no secrets may be concealed ; but he who, enjoying this solace, has also the felicity to stand well with his fellows, enjoys comfort which is reserved for few."

The devotion, the candour, the sensibility evinced by the abbot, all combined to make a deep impression on Edmund. He was reluctant to consider

Clifford the villain he was described to be, but he could not question the piety of the monk. He disdained that servile complaisance which would take up the opinion of Lord Erpingham, because it was the opinion of Lord Erpingham ; but when he calmly reviewed the facts which had been stated to him, it certainly seemed more probable, that a guilty man would lay claim to innocence, as Clifford had done, than that a man, so esteemed, so saint-like as Egbert was, should be the callous perjured monster Clifford had described him to be.

This reasoning came over his mind with increasing force, till, at last, it became perfectly irresistible. The solemn energy of Clifford was not forgotten ; but then he recalled the churlish sternness with which he had spoken to the female his companion, his own admissions, and the shame and confusion with which he had retired from one who knew the whole story of his crime. In fine,

Edmund could no longer doubt, that Lord Erpingham had come to a just conclusion. This he stated to that personage when the abbot had retired, and the unhesitating manner in which his lordship vouched for its correctness, the description which he gave of Father Egbert's exemplary life, and the details furnished of the evidence which had established the charge preferred against Clifford, all tended to fortify the opinion which he had formed.

On his own account, he did not share the regret of the peer for the fall of Elinor. It supplied a new motive for endeavouring to prevail on Ferdinand to consent to further delay ; and the moment he could break from Lord Erpingham, he hastened to prefer a request that Mariana might not yet be passed to a convent.

He found Ferdinand alone and in tears. His accustomed firmness was no more, and even in the presence of Ed-

mund, though he attempted to conceal, he could not dissipate the weakness which had come over him. On being questioned as to the cause, he replied in a tremulous voice,

“ It is over. — The pang of separation was a severe one — but it is past.”

“ Of what do you speak?”

“ Of my separation from Mariana.”

“ Have you parted from her so soon?”

“ I have — I have. We shall meet no more in this life, and for the next, no matter — I must not think of it — yet I cannot but fear that our separation is eternal.”

“ Your words fill my heart with affliction, but it seems most strange that feeling thus, you should act as you have done.”

“ Press me not on this point. — I am the sport of Fate. Denied to act as I could wish, a destructive torrent carries me away, and that it must prove destructive is my best consolation.”

“ You labour under a delusion. Your mind is diseased, and has conjured up some hideous phantom to destroy your peace.”

“ Would it were a phantom ?”

“ Mariana cannot yet have pronounced the irrevocable vow. I pray you make some pause. Trust me, I have more potent reasons than ever for asking this. At all events, before she bids a final adieu to the world, let her partake with you of the hospitality of Lord Erpingham.”

“ Lord Erpingham,” said Ferdinand suddenly resuming his accustomed firmness, “ shall never gaze upon——” He paused, and his eye glanced at Edmund as if to ascertain whether what he was about to say had been anticipated. He added sternly, but with calmness, “ he shall not gaze upon Mariana.”

“ When you shall know the person of whom you speak, I indulge the persuasion that your ideas will be different.

That in some cases you would do well to prevent Mariana from being looked upon by the great and the opulent, I admit; but Lord Erpingham was never one of those who could meanly abuse the advantages of his station."

"Was he not?" Ferdinand inquired, with most significant eagerness.

"I speak not the language of partial affection, but that of truth. When you know him, you will reverence his virtues.

"I hope not."

"Why so?"

"Because it would make the discharge of my duty more painful."

"I understand you not?"

Ferdinand looked round in confusion, like one just awakened from a dream.

"What have I said?" he demanded.

"You have said that the virtues of Lord Erpingham would make the discharge of your duty towards him more painful than it would otherwise be. Can

you seriously mean to say you would prefer being connected with one of an opposite character?"

"O! no; such was not my thought. But no more of this. Probe no further, I beseech you, the wound which your skill cannot heal. Heed not the incoherent expressions which may have fallen from me. Take me to Fickett's-fields when you will," he added, with an air of alacrity "for, trust me, I live but to do my duty by Lord Erpingham."



## CHAP. XI.

I see them sit, they linger yet;  
Avengers of their native land,  
With me in dreadful harmony they join,  
And weave with bloody hands the tissue of thy line.  
GRAY.

No obstacle appeared now to lie in the way of the execution of that design which Edmund had formed. The pious calm Egbert enjoyed, and which, from the proofs every passing day afforded of his charity and virtue, Edmund had reason to suppose was bestowed by an approving conscience, seeking and finding happiness in the performance of duty, to him appeared most enviable. The engagements into which Lord Erpingham had entered were completely set aside. Though in the instrument by which Edmund was *sold*, two sisters had been named, as the choice originally

held out to him could no longer be offered, it was not pretended that the bargain could stand, and indeed Sir Geoffrey was too much humbled by the conduct of Elinor to think more of claiming Lord Erpingham's alliance. Edmund therefore had only to obtain the consent and approbation of Lord Erpingham, before he devoted himself to a monastic life.

Ferdinand was introduced to Lord Erpingham, who soon found that his talents and acquirements had been anything but overrated. His perfect acquaintance with the Spanish was of great use, but his knowledge of America and the native languages gave him still more importance. The ability with which he executed the duties confided to him could not be surpassed; and his undeviating punctuality commanded the esteem of his noble employer.

Edmund witnessed this with satisfaction, but he looked in vain for that gratitude which the conduct of Lord Erping-

ham might be expected to inspire. Generous and ardent as he had found Ferdinand in other circumstances, he was amazed at what he remarked where Lord Erpingham was concerned. Profoundly tranquil, he uttered no complaint, but nothing of exultation ever appeared in his manner. Cold and calm, he seemed to court labour ; but from the affable friendship, and liberal remuneration with which Lord Erpingham was disposed to requite it, Ferdinand shrunk with invincible repugnance. This conduct Edmund connected with his friend's separation from Mariana, and sometimes a doubt came over his mind as to the relationship between them. He had no reason to suspect that Ferdinand had sought to deceive, but the inward grief which evidently preyed on him Edmund found so similar to what he experienced, that he felt half persuaded the origin of their sorrow was the same, and that Ferdinand, like himself, was a lover.

"You appear sad, young man," said Lord Erpingham, one day when they were alone ; "is there any thing here disquiets you that it may be in my power to remove?"

"Nothing, my lord."

"If in my arrangements you meet aught that interferes with your comfort, fear not to name it. I dare not promise that the evil will cease, for something may disturb which it shall be out of my power to reach, but in no case can I hold it an offence that you direct my attention to the thing which stands between you and comfort."

"You have wisely spoken, my lord ; there may be evils which it is not in your power to cure."

"If any one in my household has treated you, for that you are a stranger, disparagingly, my authority shall be promptly exerted to do you right."

"It needs not : here I have not been other than courteously, kindly treated."

“ Then must your sorrow have root elsewhere. It should ill become me to pry into that which you desire to conceal ; but if the oppressed heart could derive relief from communicating the cause of its affliction to another, let not the relative situations in which we stand forbid disclosure. I do not feel it shame to be the friend of those who are deemed my inferiors, and besides that, I admire your merit I am the more drawn towards you from its having been recently, not past an hour ago, reported to me that you first saw the light of heaven in the newly discovered continent.”

Ferdinand bent a look of inquiry and surprise on the nobleman, while he asked,

“ Have you, my lord ? and can that endear any one to *you* ? ”

“ It does. Were it from curiosity alone, I should prize one rich in European knowledge as you are, whom I knew to be a native of that vast theatre for ambition and enterprize.”

“ And crime,” added Ferdinand.

“ And crime, as you truly remark. In this I feel as you do ; and recalling the frightful enormities which have there been perpetrated, I shudder for the guilt incurred.”

“ Well may your lordship do so.”

“ I see,” said Lord Erpingham, “ that you have a strong sense of the injustice which has degraded the men who might have been the benefactors of a world.”

“ I have, my lord ; and scarcely can I withhold my tongue from vain rage and wild execration, while my mind dwells on the awful topic. But an avenging God has seen the horrors which have marked the murderer’s track : his wrath pursues them, and even now his hand is stretched forth to visit crime with merited punishment.”

“ I doubt it not. The Deity, always waking, cannot be baffled by the wicked

who persuade themselves that their foolish cunning may avail."

"Most true is your lordship's speech. Just vengeance cannot be defrauded; and he who now enjoys greatness, and seems securely in possession of wealth purchased by blood, may yet come to a bloody end."

"Or if," returned the peer, "that visible retribution should not be exacted on earth, we may still rest assured that it will not pass with impunity."

"But there are cases in which vengeance may not be deferred till after Nature has claimed the breath of the sinner at the hands of Age. Feeble and defenceless as the Mexicans were found, all the original invaders did not pass to their homes."

"I know it well, Ferdinand. Some of the Spaniards fell by the weapons of the native warriors, while others not so fortunate were taken alive."

"Yes; and the wrathful, but impotent

defenders of their land, made sacrifice of them to the god of war. The victims were few, and the masters of their fate sought by the extremity of pain inflicted on them to requite all their wrongs. The thought was weak and vain, and the dismal superstition which countenanced it I deplore, not less than the barbarities which demanded punishment."

" You speak as becomes a man born a Mexican, but made by education a Christian."

" Let the forfeited life be taken, where just vengeance exacts it, but not with torture ! It is enough that the transgressing spirit is dismissed from the fleshy home which might for a series of years detain it from its account, and hastened to the bar of the Eternal. But my soul abhors the vain fury which could tear open the bosom of the devoted, that the avenger's expecting eye might feast on the last throbs of a dying heart."



“ Yet in these savage delights I well remember the Mexicans revelled.”

“ It was the insane rage of war which madly answered outrage by outrage, and led the untaught invaded, to copy the horrible fierceness of their civilised invaders.”

“ Humanity must deplore the excesses on both sides.”

“ True, my lord ; but these, the effects of blind rage, I view as the unavoidable consequences of bringing hostile bodies of men into collision, and hold them to fall short of that depravity, which, deliberately exercising its powers of reasoning, can calmly, sordidly devote to destruction those whom humanity — whom nature — whom God himself enjoins man to protect and cherish.”

“ I cannot dissent from your theory ; but I am not informed of any particular instances connected with the invasion of Mexico which furnish illustration.”

"Are you *not*, my lord?" enquired Ferdinand, with an air of surprise.

"Your question," said Lord Erpingham, "is put so emphatically, that it should seem you marvel at my ignorance."

"That of which I speak is so deeply imprinted on my own memory, that I forgot it is not equally well known to those who have not been resident at Zempoalla."

"At Zempoalla, said you?"

"Aye, my lord."

"And came *you* thence?"

"I was born there. But you seem moved: it is you who now question emphatically."

"At some convenient season I may explain why I do so; for the present, it is my object to gain not to impart information. Suffice it then to say, that I am interested in the fate of certain parties whom you may have known."

"Is it possible! Can your lordship be interested for any one — at Zempoalla?"

"I would know if you have ever heard of a cazique from Mexico, who there abided?"

"What was his name?"

"Teutila."

"I have seen him."

"Know you where he is now?"

"He is where all must go — he is in the grave."

"Is that certain?"

"I can avouch it, for I was present when he breathed his last."

"What time has since elapsed?"

"Ten years."

"Then the information which I had obtained was true. And yet an after report reached me that he survived. You were very young at the time to which you refer. Are you sure that you confound not the person of whom I speak with some other cazique, who might die where you chanced to be?"

"I make no mistake. While I live,

the death of Teutila can never be confounded in my mind with that of any other mortal born of woman."

"Tell me," said Lord Erpingham, eagerly, "tell me if you know aught of Teutila's grandchildren?"

"I did not know that he had grandchildren."

"Then it cannot be the same."

"There was but one cazique so called. Teutila had one grandchild."

"There were two children."

"He of whom I speak never had but one grandchild, and that one survived him."

"Was it boy or girl?"

"It was a daughter."

"Did you remain long at Zempoalla after Teutila's death?"

"But two months."

"Can you recall to memory how that child, the grand-daughter, was bestowed?"

"She was given to the care of an

aged relative. Though I made short stay in those parts after Teutila was no more, I was there long enough to see them take leave of Zempoalla."

" Did they intend crossing the sea ?"

" They did."

" And whither did they shape their course ? Know you not that ?"

" That was a secret. When they had withdrawn themselves, no one remained in Zempoalla who knew the object of their departure, or whither they went."

" And have you since by no chance heard of their journeyings ?"

Ferdinand replied, with some hesitation, " Since that period, my lord, I have passed my days in Europe, and have had no opportunities of seeing those by whom Teutila was formerly known."

Lord Erpingham turned from Ferdinand with a hurried but faltering step ; Ferdinand looked on him with unmoved composure, but he felt somewhat curious to know the cause of the

emotion he remarked, from Lord Erpingham's own lips. The peer had seated himself, and covered the upper part of his face with one hand, when Ferdinand approached him, and with a view of inducing explanation, remarked on his apparent disorder,

"You seem disturbed, my lord?"

"It is all in vain," Lord Erpingham exclaimed. "Could the days that are passed be recalled, without withdrawing from us the knowledge which their lapse has bestowed, we might shape our course better."

"This, my lord, I say it not to flatter *you*, is felt by the best and wisest of the sons of men. But happy is he who merely finds, like your lordship, that with superior means he might have passed more happily through life. How different must the feelings of such a man be, from those of the wretch, who, devoted to selfish pleasures, can recal as he approaches the grave but the memory of those

whom he blasted with his pretended love, whose child owes him but scorn, and who finds, at that advanced period of life when penitence can little avail, since time has taken from him the power to sin, that rank cannot save him from the attacks of conscience, nor affluence purchase for his troubled spirit even a brief respite from remorse."

Lord Erpingham had recovered his wonted serenity ; he replied,

" You speak feelingly, with perfect truth and correct reasoning. I can conceive no situation in which a human being would be more deplorable, than that which you describe."

" Methinks there is one, my lord," Ferdinand rejoined. " It is that of the indurated monster who can review such conduct without being deeply, and not only deeply, but permanently afflicted by their recollection. We see the perfection of the dreadful, while regarding an outcast from salvation whose heart can re-

pose, because many unrepenting years have made him familiar with guilt, and repeated crimes subdued natural sensibility, till he has become callous to shame, and dead to all feeling."

Ferdinand looked stedfastly on Lord Erpingham while he spoke. The peer assented to the justice of his remarks; but other matters demanded his attention, and their conversation was not continued.



## CHAP. XII.

But if I must afflicted be,  
To suit some wise design,  
Then man my soul with firm resolves,  
To bear and not repine.

BURNS.

WHEN Lord Erpingham learned the resolution of Edmund, it afforded him infinite surprise. At first he regarded it as the offspring of a momentary passion, which would soon be forgotten with the resolution itself, and he could hardly think of entertaining it seriously. But when he found that his young friend had calmly, and on reflection, made up his mind to pass the remainder of his days in a monastery, he endeavoured to make him acquainted with all those circumstances, which he considered likely to be found irksome to one of his years.

He did not very strenuously oppose the project; for he admitted that his own life would have passed away more happily had he come to a similiar determination in his youth. Not considering himself to be fully qualified to advise on this subject, he insisted on his consulting with Father Egbert, whose wise and disinterested counsel he was satisfied might be relied on with perfect confidence, and for this purpose he accompanied Edmund to the establishment over which that sanctified personage presided.

It was to the monastery of Leadenhall that they repaired, which stood on part of the site of the market which now bears that name. Though the reforming, or to use a more appropriate and intelligible expression, the rapacious hand of King Henry, had already made free with the funds of divers religious establishments, the house of the *priests of the Trinity* at Leadenhall continued to flourish unmo-

lest by power, and enjoyed so high a reputation on account of the exemplary character of its inhabitants, that no one who visited the market for grain which then existed could anticipate, that the hymn which ushered in the morning, the solemn strains which accompanied the celebration of high mass, and the "even song" then daily heard on that spot, would, even in the lapse of ages, be compelled to give way to the clamorous cries of "What d'ye buy?—What d'ye buy?" with which it now resounds.

Admitted to the apartment of the abbot, Lord Erpingham with little delay acquainted him with the cause of their visit. Egbert's surprise was so extreme, that for some moments it actually bereft him of speech, and he gazed on each of them alternately in silent wonder, as if he doubted the evidence of his senses.

"I see," said Lord Erpingham, "you marvel much at the occasion of our

coming hither; but thus the matter stands. The youth before you had fixed his affections on a fair maiden. He had reason to hope that she might be his wife; but by untoward circumstances she has been withdrawn from him.

“By death?” enquired the abbot.

“Not by death. She lives, but he may think of her no more; and for the grief which this causes to prey upon his mind, he believes the world can afford no consolation but that which a religious life may supply. He would at once enter a monastery, but this would I in no wise permit till he had taken counsel from your wisdom and experience.”

“I could rejoice,” Egbert replied, “in the prospect thus held out to me of winning from the world a soul to God, but that I fear the grief which now oppresses him being abated, his heart will awake to desire the gilded vanities of life.”

“Never,” said Edmund; “though left to roam at large, and gaze on all the

allurements that could be set forth to wake a taste for sensual pleasure."

"This you can easily imagine, under the pressure of the moment ; but when time hath soothed your sorrow, then do I fear the worldly spirit within a frame so youthful will delight to recal the visions in which it formerly delighted."

"Fear me not, holy sir. Secluded from the world as I shall be, what is there within the walls of a monastery that can recal the past ? Trust me, I hope in time to attain the happy elevation of soul which lifts you above the low desires that agitate others. You will not deny that you enjoy exemption from these, the most appalling infirmities of our nature ; and I dare flatter myself, that you will not disdain to instruct me how to imitate the virtue I admire."

Egbert looked on the young man for some moments. He shook his head, as contemplating with pain the difficult task which he desired to impose upon himself,

and answered, in the mild accents of paternal admonition,

“It is true, that I — most humbly I thank him who willed that it should be so — have so far triumphed over my natural weakness, that I have ceased to crave those earthly gratifications which many seek at risk of their salvation. But I will not disguise from you, that the struggle was long and painful which my soul had to sustain against the tempter. In vain did I bend in prayer — in vain did I look on the symbol of mercy — nay, in vain did I touch the very wood of the true cross from Calvary : my rebellious thoughts still roamed from the objects on which they ought to have rested, to unhallowed themes of contemplation.”

There was a touching earnestness in the manner of the ecclesiastic, which proved that he could feel for the weakness he described, however remote it might be from his own bosom.

After a pause, which neither of his

visitors attempted to interrupt, Egbert resumed,

“ So it hath been with me ; and nothing to conceal from friends so dear, though shame and remorse must attend the confession, I will acknowledge that my mind was thus disturbed even on sacred ground, and while at the head of a fraternity who looked up to me for example. Thus did I feel beneath the consecrated roof of the monastery of Mount Sinai, and even while these eyes were fixed on awful Horeb, whence God vouchsafed to be seen by mortal man, when descending to earth he gave the law to Moses.”

The solemn tone in which he spoke inspired religious awe. Lord Erpingham and Edmund listened with interest and with reverence, but were silent.

“ I believe you are sincere,” Egbert went on, “ in what you now profess, but you imperfectly comprehend the course of life which you must lead in a monas-

tery, if your present wishes were attended to, and you once became a member of this fraternity."

"Easily can I comprehend that I have much to learn, but of the general character of the duties and observances which will be required of me, I think I am not wholly ignorant."

"But imagination is a cheat, which decks every object with colours not of right belonging to it. How often do we revel in scenes of cloudless happiness, which we flatter ourselves we shall not fail to realise, when some wished for period arrives:—it comes, and all is storms and darkness, anguish and despair. Your fancy has now been at work on a monastic life, and you image to yourself a state of calm repose, of unruffled serenity, in which life may sweetly glide away, bright and tranquil as the meandering brook which you have sometimes gazed upon in the evening of a summer's day. But if such your expectation, assuredly



you will be disappointed. The path to heaven is thorny ; — pain must be endured and mortifications sustained, such as may give your fortitude severer trial than you would voluntarily endure.”

“ To avoid such pains is not my object ; I no more covet indolent repose than animated pleasure. The duties to which you allude will occupy my mind, and sacred hope, still promising a happier life, make this not comfortless.”

“ But can you bear the ills of poverty ? These form a part of our discipline. Your garment shall be coarse, and oftentimes your meals, in place of the sumptuous banquets to which you are now bidden, shall yield but bread and water. Never may you forth alone. On Wednesday and Saturday you will eat but twice in each day ; and from Septuagesima till Easter you shall eat no flesh at all. Should you quarrel with your brother, you must eat your food for seven days from the bare ground. While at

meals: you may not converse as you are now wont to do, and when you retire to the dormitory, silence must be observed."

"To all such regulations I would willingly conform."

"If, indeed, your frame of mind be so perfect, I have little more to urge. This only, duty to my Lord and regard for you, compels me to add, if luxury or rest are the objects of your desire, they are not to be sought in a monastery. You must be poor, abstemious and obedient; when you would sleep you shall be required to be waking; when desirous of eating you must fast; and when you would go forth you shall be forcibly detained."

"Such restraint will for me be needless; for being once entered, I shall wish to come out no more."

"I," said Lord Erpingham, "concur with our holy friend in thinking this excess of melancholy must abate, and a time

may come when you will think differently."

"If I should wish to go forth at all, it would be to seek your Lordship; but as I know it will pleasure you to learn that I find all I desire within the walls of my intended retreat, it is my purpose to wean myself so wholly from the wish of seeing the world, that even for such a purpose I will not forth, but shall rest satisfied with hearing that your charity continues to bless the friendless till — I cannot wish the day may be other than distant — you shall be called to heaven."

"Resolved as you are," said Lord Erpingham, "I will not seek to make you regret that you have come to a determination which it is not in my power to change. But I would still suggest that you may do well to consider of those restrictions and privations to which, if you devote yourself to a religious life, you must submit."

"Heed them not, my lord. If ever

they give me pain, I am sure it will only rise from the reflection that similar hardships must be endured by one less capable of bearing them than I am. If the pains to be sustained are sharp, I shall partake of the consolations of those who willingly bear them now."

"Questionless, you will," said Egbert, "and you err not in supposing that they are great. It will be your happy lot to claim a share in all the good actions which have been performed by the brotherhood. You will receive the kiss of peace, which it is mine on divers occasions to bestow on the fraternity; and when the host is carried to the sick, you in your turn shall enjoy the distinction of bearing the sponge filled with holy water, which it is meet and fitting should be used on such occasions."

The abbot looked while he spoke, as if he anticipated some exclamation of rapture from Edmund, at learning that he was to participate in advantages so

important. In this he was not gratified, for the grief which induced Edmund to act as he did, made him insensible to any distinction that it might be the object of ordinary devotion or of ecclesiastical ambition to gain. Egbert made no remark on his apathy, but proceeded to mention other boons which he might possibly receive. If denied to dance, "*save at Christmas and other honest times of recreation,*" he was informed, that he should be allowed to assist in the representation of those sacred mysteries, which were annually performed. Though the youngest brother in the first year was generally required to be the representative of *Satan*, Egbert announced to Edmund that he thought this might be avoided. At all events he promised to use his best exertions, to save him from the *devil*. It would be unreasonable to expect that he could become at once the representative of *Father, Son, or Holy Ghost* ; but he assured

Lord Erpingham that he had reason to believe he could prevail upon the brothers to agree that Edmund should be one of the *angels*. He stated with much exultation that the monastery was rich in what would now be called "theatrical properties," inasmuch as it boasted the possession of four *chevelures*, or perukes, to be worn by as many *cherubim*, besides *halo*, and *white* and *flaxen beards*, for the first and second persons of the Trinity. Moreover they had dyed cloths strained on timber representing *heaven*, and an elegantly painted *wooden tomb*, which was used when they acted at Easter "the Resurrection of Christ." "Here," said he, addressing himself to Lord Erpingham, as if resolved at once to dispel all regret for the loss of his young friend, "here shall Edmund be placed, if my voice may be at all attended to. It shall then be his important duty, when the *Holy Virgin* and *Mary Magdalen* knock without the

tomb, to demand from within ‘Whom seek ye?’ and when they as is the manner, after the language of the Gospel, give answer ‘*We seek Jesus of Nazareth,*’ it will be for Edmund, all attired in white, and wearing one of the chevelures which I before mentioned, to reply, ‘*He whom you seek is not here.*’ ”

The advantages thus held out did not particularly exhilarate Edmund; but far-cical as they now appear, Lord Erpingham, who with all his virtues and discernment owned a strong attachment to, and veneration for the ancient usages of the church; considered them, if not of the first importance, as not at all to be derided.

CHAP. XIII.

Nothyng is to man so dere  
As womany's love yn gode manere.

ROBERT DE BRUNNE.

It has already been hinted, that if the abbot calculated on making a monastery more agreeable to Edmund than it would otherwise have seemed, by describing the histrionic glory which might await him, he did not greatly succeed. To be dressed to represent an angel, and even to act the important part in the tomb of which Egbert had spoken, were matters of no importance in his estimation. He indeed regarded them with somewhat of distaste, and would have been rather pleased than otherwise to have learned that such exhibitions were not considered useful or necessary. But his purpose re-



mained the same, and Lord Erpingham no longer opposed his resolution to join the priests of the Trinity at Leadenhall. The piety and intelligence of the abbot commanded his admiration, and the charity with which he always spoke of Clifford when he had occasion to mention him, proved, what indeed seemed completely established by other circumstances, that Egbert had been calumniated, and Edmund felt much satisfaction at the idea of putting himself under the government of the holy father, whom he had formerly viewed from credulity, which he now regarded as culpable, with distrust.

However creditable to the brotherhood the acquisition of Edmund might prove, Egbert was sufficiently disinterested to call upon him in the strongest manner to reconsider his resolution. To do this, Edmund declared was utterly useless, and he therefore desired at once to take the irrevocable vow. But the abbot re-

fused to comply with his request, and insisted on his going through the usual period of probation. Edmund was forced to yield; but he declared that from the moment of entering the house, he should consider that he parted from the world for ever.

Ferdinand witnessed with unaffected sorrow the sacrifice which Edmund was about to make. He viewed it as the tenderest mark of affection which a lover could offer to the memory of the mistress of his affections, but he laboured most earnestly to dissuade his friend from carrying his resolution into effect. He represented to him, that he need not despair of meeting with brighter beauties under happier circumstances — under circumstances which could present no bar to their union with him; and he conjured him not to waste those energies in a monastery which might, with his prospects, be called into action for the benefit of his country.

But never did Ferdinand, while anxious to move him from his purpose, drop one word that could awake the slightest hope in the bosom of Edmund, that if he did so the fate of Mariana might be changed. Of her he spoke not ; a sigh would sometimes escape him when he heard her name, but it was invariably his object to regard her as one that was no more of the world.

Edmund became a probationer in the house of the priests of the Trinity. He was received with little form, but with much cordiality. Egbert preached a sermon on the occasion, in which he again set forth the importance of maturely considering the nature of a religious life, before a novice decided to embrace it. He at the same time dwelt most emphatically on the impossibility of allowing him, who had once been admitted, to recall his vow. The conduct of the church he likened in this instance to that of a father having a sick son, who could only be cured by

the knife and cautery. To sustain this operation, the son consented to be bound ; but when he felt the pain, he began to rave and would fain be let loose. This the parent would in no wise permit. And so his sermon continued, “ Holy church, having once taken the soul into its care, will not suffer the weakness of the body to risk its perdition. It is most strictly enjoined, that those who become members of this sacred flock, shall not be suffered to stray from the fold. As a man carries a candle, guarding it with both hands that it shall not be blown out, so must those who govern a monastery encompass the unsteady brother, that his spiritual light shall not be extinguished. Seeing that the step once taken may not be corrected, fitting it is, that time should be allowed, that it be not ventured rashly. A wren there is, the which hath long slender legs, and is named after Saint Martin. This bird, sitting one day in a tree, vain-gloriously exclaimed, ‘ Little

should it matter to me though the heavens fall, since I with my strong legs could support them.' Tumbles an acorn upon his head that same moment, whereupon away darted the foolish boaster, screaming as he flew, 'O St. Martin ! St. Martin ! save your own poor bird.' There are men who, like unto this foolish bird, think they can bear all that may fall on them, but who sorely repent them, and are affrighted so soon as pain or the very appearance of suffering approacheth."

Other fables from that collection attributed to Odo de Ceriton, which contributed so largely to enrich the sermons of the middle ages, were used by the monk and turned in the same way, all of which tended to warn the probationer not to persevere in his design unless he was thoroughly satisfied that his constancy could not be shaken. "For he that having once entered, should thereafter desire his enlargement, even like the ass in the fable, who having parted

with half of his tail, prayed that it might be again lengthened, should be laughed to scorn."

Edmund entered the monastery. The solemnities in which he was required to take a part offended not the melancholy which had taken possession of his mind. It soothed him to reflect, that though divided from Mariana, it was his to share the duties which were imposed upon her. He had no wish to leave the hallowed walls which enclosed him for a moment; and when Lord Erpingham was brought to him by Egbert, though he welcomed him with all affection, he besought the peer not to think him deficient in gratitude or love, when he prayed him not to risk recalling his thoughts to worldly affairs by repeating the kindly intended visit.

"Mark you that, my lord," said the abbot, "so pure, so perfect is the holy zeal of this young brother, that he would fain see no more the friend he most esteems on earth, lest such indulgence should

carry him back to the vanities which he hath abjured. This saint-like piety your lordship will know how to revere, nor will you think it any disparagement that he places you not on a level with that Being to whom he is wholly devoted."

The praise thus bestowed in presence of Lord Erpingham, Egbert often repeated before the rest of the fraternity. They treated Edmund with respect and kindness, but one of them seemed more attentive, though not more respectful than the rest. Brother Nicholas often looked on him with a steadfastness which attracted his notice ; but if Edmund spoke to him at those seasons when conversation was not prohibited, he gave the shortest possible answer or none at all. Edmund considered this a mark of contempt, and was quite satisfied that he had come to a right conclusion, when one day, after the abbot had warmly eulogised the piety of the probationer, he saw this bro-

ther turn his head aside, and perceived him to be convulsed with laughter.

He endeavoured to suppress that indignation which derision usually inspires, and he was not slow in reflecting, that he ought to be more than consoled for any slight which he might meet with from one of the brotherhood, by the marked attention of their principal. Egbert, he considered a pattern of devotion, as well as of humility. Though strict in causing the rules of the house to be observed, there was no austerity in his manner. In the refectory, he commonly went round with drink to the monks, and meekly kissed the hands of each. On particular days, he performed the office of washing their feet, and this was done with as much self-abasement, as if, instead of being their superior, he had been their hired menial servant. A tear of admiration sometimes started in the eye of Edmund while he remarked such condescension. "This," thought he, "is



indeed a worthy servant of the Christian church, for he is really meek and lowly in spirit."

But of his vigilance and resolution, to guard against those under his care suffering their thoughts to rove to that world which they had avowed it to be their determination to renounce, Edmund soon had a proof which was more decisive than agreeable. Indulged with pen, ink, and paper, when the devotions of the day had concluded, he had on one night remained waking in his cell, (he had been favoured with one to himself), and suffered those feelings which grew out of his peculiar situation to escape from him in the following lines :

Anaunt ye flatering dreames of dayes agone,

Whiche by sadde variaunce haue begat my wo,

Sithence poore wyght ! a fayre I looked on,

I in my new condicion must forego.

Nathless her deynty beautie doth enthrall,

Bee all my euill gouernaunce forgiven !

That face and eke that persoune I recall,

Togyder with that lippe and smyle from heauen.

Ah why ! interrogateth my lorn soule,  
 Did I one of soche gode manere descry,  
 Wakenyng desyres whiche I can none controule,  
 To loke for blisse and fynde sharpe agonie ?  
 Most sadde ! But through this murkinesse hope craves  
 To tell that our heartes twain released from stryfe,  
 Shall everych rising from the silent grave  
 Proue mighty love fails not with losse of lyfe.

The feelings of Edmund will perhaps  
 be more intelligibly rendered by a modern  
 imitation of the foregoing stanzas :

Away ye dreams of other days,  
 The fruitful source of fond regret,  
 While yet on features I might gaze  
 It now were virtue to forget.  
 But still those beauties will enthrall,  
 And still, O be the sin forgiven ?  
 That face, that form I must recall  
 That lip of love, that look of heaven.

Ah why ! the restless mind inquires,  
 Did such perfection meet my eye,  
 To wake vain wishes, wild desires,  
 Then thrill with keenest agony ?  
 But piercing through a convent's gloom,  
 Hope whispers, when reclaimed our breath,  
 Two faithful hearts beyond the tomb  
 Shall hail love victor over death.

The monastery bell had just struck one  
 when the door of Edmund's cell was  
 opened, and Father Egbert entered.

“ Much do I marvel, son, to find your waking at this late hour,” he said, as he advanced ; “ you are too ardent in the race of piety, methinks, long to continue in this course. Take heed that you fail not. I do not wish to see this overstrained exertion. A man, however he may covet to appear tall of stature, cannot walk on tip-toe all his life, and better it is, in my judgment, not to aim at too much, than suddenly to fail in what has been attempted.”

The tone of remonstrance which the abbot took on this occasion was new to Edmund, and he felt embarrassed how to answer.

“ What may this be !” exclaimed Egbert, taking up the paper on which Edmund had been writing. No answer was made, and he proceeded to read it.

Having perused the verses, an air of disappointment sat on his features, but he spoke with his accustomed kindness.

“ Youth, I have admonished thee

against perseverance in a rashly formed resolution, for great indeed is his sin, who, professing to offer all his heart to God, still suffers his thoughts to rest on the toys and gew-gaws of the world. It is not even now too late to retrace thy steps. Do it, young man, and trifle not by undertaking to offer thy undivided heart to the Creator, while it breathes vows of love and adoration in honour of a mortal."

"Forgive me, holy sir ; but it was my hope, that in merely expressing a wish that my spirit might again meet with that of a being once beloved in a better world, I sinned not against those rules to the observance of which I stand pledged."

"And can you imagine that a love-ditty, tending to awaken a thirst for sensual delights, which all here must study to quench for ever, would well accord with those holy exercises which occupy our days. Even now, I come

to summon you to the performance of a solemn duty. Brother Richard, who last night expired, has just been discovered to have had wealth concealed about his couch, of which he never gave account; wherefore, that law which dooms the offender's corpse to flagellation, is forthwith to be enforced. Think you that amorous strains in praise of beautiful eyes and lips ought to fill his imagination, who is called on to assist in the castigation of a deceased culprit."

Edmund shrunk with disgust and horror from the ceremony thus announced. He replied —

"I crave your forgiveness; but if it may be, I would gladly stand excused from attendance on this occasion."

"It little surpriseth me that the contemplation of the charms of beauty, should be more agreeable to a young mind than the execution of a solemn duty on the loathsome remains of a deceased sinner. But it is not for me to indulge such fan-

cies within these walls. Harsh though it may seem, I hesitate not to say this night you must perform the irksome task of scourging the dead body. It is but one of many painful offices which attach to the life of a member of this fraternity. To-morrow, if so minded, you will be free to depart ; but while you continue here, it would be reproach to me if I suffered friendship to interpose between you and that which, in your present character, ought by you to be done."

He spoke mildly but peremptorily, at the same time making a sign for Edmund to follow him. The latter saw that there was no alternative, and reluctantly complied.

The abbot conducted him through the corridor to the refectory, and thence by a narrow passage through which Edmund had never been before. Here several of the brothers were assembled, a torch being borne by every third monk. They descended to a vault beneath, and, stretched

on a low bier by the side of the grave in which it was presently to be deposited, lay extended the body. The face was towards the ground — the lower part was covered with sackcloth. Edmund turned his head in disgust from the abhorrent spectacle, but was called upon to act the part assigned to him. A whip had been placed in his hand, and he found that Nicholas was to be his colleague on this occasion. The ill opinion he had formed of that man was not diminished by the readiness with which he appeared to enter upon the performance of the task. The probationer strove to reason down the loathings which oppressed him, by reflecting that the infliction of stripes could give no pain to the dead, and he advanced to the body to fulfil his task. He raised his hand to strike, but when he again saw the lifeless monk, and perceived the livid flesh already marked by the whip of Nicholas, his resolution left him — the instrument of punishment fell

from his grasp, and he burst through the circle which encompassed him, with an exertion of strength which no one offered to oppose — which no single member of the fraternity could have opposed with effect.

Egbert, considering that enough had been done to initiate the new member, so far as rites of this description were concerned, suffered another to take up the whip which Edmund was to have wielded, and the flagellation was completed without further aid being demanded from him. The body being then committed to the earth, a solemn requiem was sung for the soul of the departed, whose guilt, it was presumed, had been expiated by the flogging sustained by the body to which it had belonged, and the brethren were dismissed to repose.



## CHAP. XIV.

A man must think of all the villanies  
He knows in all men, to decypher thee,  
That art the centre to impiety.

CHAPMAN.

ON the following day the abbot resumed all his wonted kindness towards Edmund. He expressed regret for the violence which had been done to his feelings at the funeral of the departed brother, but thus he considered it to be his duty to act, more especially as it was free for Edmund to withdraw himself from the fraternity, and he was anxious that nothing which was painful should remain to be discovered when retreat would be impossible.

Edmund was not only satisfied with this explanation, but grateful for the ingenuous conduct of Father Egbert. Admitting the necessity of strictly adhering

to those rules which had served as the foundation of the fame enjoyed by the brotherhood, he thought it would ill become him to complain that they were not deviated from for his accommodation, and he announced it to be his intention to remain an inmate of the monastery.

Hitherto Egbert had exerted himself to display the trials, privations, and sufferings which the members of a religious fraternity must be prepared to endure ; but now, finding such representations had made no impression on the probationer, he no longer scrupled to disclose to his view the other side of the picture. He spoke with exultation of the interest in heaven obtained by those who thus withdrew themselves from the temptations of life, and painted in glowing colours the felicity enjoyed, even here, by those who passed their days in devout preparation.

Edmund was no inattentive listener to language like this. The powers which

had failed to turn him from a course which he was inclined to follow, were sufficient to induce him to pursue it with increased ardour. He was impatient for the arrival of the hour which would witness the performance of the last solemnity. Egbert ceased to oppose his wishes, and consented to abridge the period which had at first been named as the date of his probation.

The conduct of the monk, which had from Edmund's entrance been singular, continued to be so, but in various ways, and in ways which seemed irreconcilably at variance with each other. He looked as if he disdained to exchange a word, declined answering if spoken to, and yet sometimes lingered near Edmund, as if he coveted to be alone with him, or as if it were his especial business to watch his every action. The deportment of Nicholas was so remarkable in this way, on the night before Edmund was to be formally numbered with the fraternity, that

he could hardly refrain from calling the attention of the abbot to the circumstance; but reluctance to complain prevailed over displeasure.

Edmund now took a final leave of the world. Become a member of the order, bound by a solemn vow to remain faithful to the fraternity while it continued to exist, the first resolve of the new brother was to guard against its reputation being tarnished by any negligence on his part. He rose early, retired late, and distinguished himself by the most rigid observance of all the duties which the brethren thought fitted to occupy them in this life, to prepare them for a better.

But though from his time being thus filled up, he experienced some relief, nothing could cure the grief caused by the loss of Mariana. His health declined beneath the united pressure of mental anguish and unwonted bodily fatigue. But this gave him little concern, as he

had now learnt to regard life as an infliction, and its termination as a release from pain.

His weakness continuing to increase, he yielded to the entreaties of the abbot to remain in his cell. From Egbert he received the most marked attention. Could he have tasted them, delicacies till then unknown within those walls, would have been at his command. These he declined; but the kindness of the abbot would not be repressed, and one night he carried to Edmund with his own hands a horn of warm ippocras, which he insisted on leaving, and which he made it his particular request that the sick man should drink. But his kindness was of no avail. Had Edmund been so far inclined to relax in his discipline as to avail himself of the present, it would not have been in his power, for Nicholas, who attended Egbert on this errand, lingered a moment behind, while the abbot hastily retreated to escape the grate-

ful acknowledgments of Edmund and carelessly, if not wilfully, suffered the ample sleeve of his habit to encounter the horn, which was overturned, and its contents spilt on the floor. A wink, singularly indicative of low cunning, and exultation over mischief, followed this exploit, and Nicholas retired.

Though he wanted not the refreshment which had been set before him, Edmund felt ruffled at the treatment which he had received from one whom he had never sought to offend. But he endeavoured to calm the anger which he felt rising in his bosom, by reflecting that it was now his duty to endure with patience. He had succeeded in restoring his mind to a state of tranquillity, and was sinking to sleep, when his door was suddenly but silently opened, and the individual of whom he had so much reason to complain appeared.

"Methinks," said Edmund, who could no longer help giving expression to his

displeasure, "your anxiety to annoy need not keep you waking. If you have any new indignity to offer, at least you might have the forbearance to reserve it till to-morrow, and not intrude upon my solitude at the dead hour of night."

"No time like the present, brother. A child never likes the hour of taking physic ; but that must not prevent those about him from giving him the proper dose at a convenient season."

There was a vulgar pleasantry in the manner with which this speech was uttered, which seemed to Edmund somewhat out of its place in one devoted to religion.

"Whatever your errand may be," said Edmund ; "tell it at once."

"I will, unless by looking on me you can save me that trouble. Have you no recollection of having seen this goodly frontispiece of mine before you came here ? Look at me well, and speak."

Amazed at being thus accosted, Edmund stedfastly regarded his unexpected visitor for some moments.

“Your features,” said he, “seem familiar; but where I have seen them, I am at a loss to declare.”

“Yet it is not long since I made you recall them. But I cannot wonder, that in this place, in this dress, and in the character which I now assume, you should be unable to recognise poor Nick Bray, the fool.”

“Can it be possible! Are you indeed the fool?”

“No, I must not say that. You know the rules of our order enjoin humility, and being reduced to what I am, I must not now pretend to the dignity of a fool. Reputation depends upon accident and fashion. Nothing will now go down but Will Somers’s jokes. Though at one time I flattered myself I could say and do as many ridiculous things as he could, the prejudice at last ran so strongly in his favour, that nothing I could accomplish was thought tolerably absurd.”



“ But by what means did you get introduced to this brotherhood ? ”

“ The tale is somewhat long, and I doubt if time will serve for the telling of it. Not to enter into details — after the death of my poor old master, the cardinal, my fooleries dwindled in importance. From being the jester of the lord, I descended to become that of the knight and the squire, and going lower and lower, I was at last forced to take place at the stews. Even there I failed ; and so, not having wit enough to get my living as a fool, I was constrained to turn to something else. I was accordingly humble enough to try what I could do in the way of common sense. When I saw you at Canterbury, I had just engaged myself as serving-man to a nobleman ; but shortly after I met with our worthy abbot, and he prevailed upon me to become a monk.”

“ He knew not of your former profession, I conclude.”

"Trust me, he did. He knew me not in my glory, but after I got to Southwark."

"To Southwark?"

"Aye, to Southwark; have you so soon forgotten that I told you I had been jester at the stews?"

"No, I have not forgotten it, and hence my surprise. Mean you to say that Egbert knew you there?"

"It is even so."

Edmund started with emotion. The tale of Clifford's woes came to his recollection, with the melancholy persuasion that they were unmerited, and that Egbert, whom he had been brought to regard as little less than a saint, was a monster.

"What you have stated," he said to the jester, "fills me with astonishment and horror. Let me not mistake. You say he knew you there. Did he ever go to that scene of iniquity?"

"He did. To my knowledge, nights

which he has given out were passed in prayer by the sick and the dying, were wasted there in lewd society."

"Then what Clifford told of him was true."

"Most veritable."

"But, knowing this, why did not you step forward and make known what you had seen time enough to save that ill-fated young man from the ignominious punishment to which he was doomed?"

"Of what avail would the testimony of a low profligate, a servant at the stews, have been, opposed to the oaths of the pious liars who swore to Egbert's being in another place, at the time Clifford and I knew him to have been in Southwark?"

"It might have had some weight."

"Impossible. Had twenty witnesses, circumstanced like myself, appeared, speaking to nothing but the truth, they would have been thought united in an infamous conspiracy. The parties would

have exposed themselves to danger, and might even have brought on Clifford additional punishment."

"That, methinks, could not be."

"With all submission to you, master Edmund, seeing you are a gentleman born, a difference of opinion may exist on that subject. Though there is something ungenteel and awkward connected with standing in a pillory, and though it must hurt a man's feelings to have his ears cropped, yet all this is preferable to hanging. Master Clifford himself, I believe, would tell you this, if you ask the question the next time you take a stoup of ale with him in his tent."

"Talk not with levity on such a subject. I am confused — I know not what to say or think. What you have told me seems incredible. Your conduct altogether is a perfect riddle."

"A riddle easily explained. You have wondered at my sullen silence on some occasions. I feared though my counte-

nance escaped your observation, that my speech might lead to a premature recognition, and I considered it for our mutual interest that we should be regarded as strangers. Egbert did not want you here. In describing the advantages of a religious life, when you consulted him, he (so himself reported,) only touched on such topics as he thought least calculated to accord with your taste, and likely to disgust. It was in pursuance of this design that the dead man was flogged. Poor Richard had no money to conceal; he was dealt with but to set you against the austere discipline pretended to be maintained here."

"Pretended to be maintained!"

"Those were my words. The abbot no longer ventures to Southwark, but he has brought the disorders of Southwark here. He was most unwilling to admit you a member of the fraternity, as he feared things might come to your knowledge, which, if they in any way transpired, would furnish our good king with what

he has no objection to find, a fair pretence for appropriating to himself the goods and revenues of Leadenhall."

" Might he not have objected to your coming for the same reason ?"

" No. — In the first place, he had not so high an opinion of my virtue and piety as he ought to have had, seeing I had been fool to a cardinal; and so he did not suppose that I should be shocked or surprised at meeting with crime in a monastery. Secondly, he knew me to be in possession of a part of his history, which he did not wish repeated even by one who had been a professed jester, lest by some accident it should obtain credit, and bring others forward who could speak to matters of the same kind; and therefore he judged it better to get me here and stop my mouth."

" By making you a monk ?"

" Aye. He told of the easy merry life I should lead here, and I preferred taking this garb to eat and drink in in-

dolence, to seeking a livelihood by hardly requited servitude. He has gained his object. I am seldom permitted to leave the house, never — this is the rule of the order — without a companion, which companion is appointed to watch over my words and actions.”

“ I am shocked !”

“ You have reason to be so. I am convinced he desires nothing so much as to get rid of you.”

At this moment Edmund recollected the ippocras which had been knocked down by Bray. A suspicion flashed across his mind, and he impatiently enquired —

“ Was it therefore that you threw down the horn this evening ?”

“ It was.”

“ And can you suppose that the abbot would proceed so far as to attempt my destruction.”

“ I have not time to tell what I know, so will not dilate on what I only suppose.

Thus much I may say, I do not believe that he brought you a potion which would have caused you to be found dead in the morning ; but I know that it was intended to make you sleep, and believe that deleterious drugs were used in its preparation, to undermine your health."

" But why should he be anxious for my sleeping this night in particular ?"

" Because several of this holy fraternity, who have been subjected to some restraint by your coming among them, are a little impatient, and these, taking advantage of your temporary absence, had so carelessly indulged, that they were already inebriated, and much disposed to be noisy, when he so considerately attended you."

" Every word you utter creates new astonishment. I cannot believe the things you tell."

" If you choose to pass along the corridor, and to the door of the apartment communicating with the refectory, which



you can do in silence, and without a light, you will be convinced that I have not attempted to deceive. Before I left, the whole party drank, on their knees, "to all the courtezans in the world;" and, if still capable of speech, I will answer for it they are little better occupied at this moment."

"I will do what you suggest," said Edmund: "I will have conviction."

"Go cautiously. In the meantime I will step to the dormitory for a memorandum which I had made, and which it was my intention to put into your hands to-morrow, had I not found an opportunity of speaking with you this night. I will then, unless the party seem on the point of breaking up, tell you more of my thoughts."

Both immediately left the cell. They separated. Edmund approached the door of the room which had been mentioned. It was closed, and the key was in the lock, but through a small crack in one of

the pannels he could perceive that the brethren were not practising that self-denying abstemiousness which they professed, while the loud but indistinct speech of some of the party satisfied him that several, if not all, were in a state of intoxication. He had no wish to learn more, and was softly drawing back when his foot slipped and he stumbled. That moment the door opened, and Egbert demanded, "Who comes there?"

Edmund had sufficient presence of mind to advance towards the door, as if he had intended to enter the apartment in which the brethren were engaged. At the same time he addressed the abbot —

"Forgive me reverend sir, but the wine which your bounty proffered for the solace of my weakness, has been spilt. I thirst, and would fain obtain a cup of water."

The abbot was much surprised. He however placed his form in the door-way, so as to bar all entrance.

“ I — I did not expect to see you my son, this night. I fear you have done wrong to leave your couch. Trust me, I am sorry for the untoward accident which brought you here. But retire — retire without delay, and I will bring you a new supply of ippocras. Retire, I say, strait, for your health may suffer from delay.”

Edmund retreated to his cell. He was fearful that Bray would return at the moment when the abbot should be there, but he was spared the embarrassment which such a meeting must have occasioned. Egbert failed not to make good his promise. He brought another cup of spiced wine, a part of which he insisted that Edmund should drink in his presence. He enquired if he could render any further service, and being answered in the negative, withdrew. Edmund remarked that he locked the door on the outside. For some time he waited in expectation of the jester's return, but

a drowsiness now came over him which he could not resist. He remembered what Bray had told him of the object of the abbot, but his senses began to wander, and sleep sealed his eyes.

## CHAP. XV.

Why rove my thoughts beyond this last retreat?  
Why feels my heart its long forgotten beat?

POPE.

UNACCUSTOMED to resist, Mariana entered the convent of St. Helen without a murmur, but not without a tear. It was in vain that Ferdinand called upon her, with the authority of an uncle, to dismiss the grief which he regarded as a weakness. While she gazed for the last time on one who had ever been dear to her, and one on whom she had long leaned for support, she experienced affliction which no language can pourtray, and when added to this came those regrets which of themselves were sufficient to depress a spirit less likely to be borne down than that of the gentle Mariana, her heart seemed to sink within her, and the

paleness of anticipated death already invaded her cheek.

The nuns expressed the highest satisfaction at gaining such an addition to their society, and the prioress, though her piercing looks made the novice tremble, spoke in the gentlest accents. Mariana had never known a mother's love. Often had she looked, not with envy, for of that she was incapable, but with deep regret, that she had not been permitted to taste the happiness which she beheld, when it was her fortune to see a young female the object of a fond mother's care. To find herself now treated with maternal kindness by one who in years she could suppose to be what her own mother might have been, affected her deeply, and though it could not supply consolation, it failed not to inspire gratitude.

But tenderly as she was treated, Mariana marked in the conduct of the prioress anxiety to instruct her in the duties of a nun without loss of time. In doing this,

she was careful not to shock the new comer by harshly announcing the regulations which must be observed. The method which she took was to withdraw Mariana from the rest of the sisterhood, and describe them, while giving the history of the institution, so as to enable her young charge to infer what was expected from every one belonging to the institution.

Wishing to strip precept of its dryness and severity, she connected it with narrative ; and while teaching the duty of a nun, she acted as if her main object was to gratify curiosity.

She recounted to Mariana, with glowing exultation, the glorious labours of St. Helena, and told her the empress of that name, under the immediate guidance of heaven, had been so happy as to discover the true cross, a portion of which was then beneath that sacred roof, which portion had all the miraculous virtue of the whole. . But, to convey a

more lively idea of this incident, she produced the seal of the convent. This was in the form of an eye; on its rim the inscription "*Sigill: Monialum Sancte Elene Londoniarum*" appeared; and within this, the empress Helena was represented sustaining the cross in an erect position, her left arm round the shaft, and the three nails which had sustained the hands and feet of Jesus grasped in her hand. On the opposite side, a group of devout worshippers were portrayed, who, with bended knees and uplifted eyes and hands, looked towards the expiatory emblem, for comfort and salvation.

When Mariana's attention had been duly directed towards the objects here depicted, it was next led to the contents of a parchment, to which the seal was appended. These consisted of the regulations which Reginald Kentwode, dean of Saint Paul's, had thought proper to frame for this pious sisterhood, in the year 1439. The articles were many, but



the prioress herself took the trouble to select the two which follow, and read them to Mariana.

“ That ye, ne noone of youre sustres, use nor haunt any place withinne the priory, thoroghe the wiche evel suspicyone or sclaudere mythe aryse, weche places (for certeyne causes which move us) we wryte not hereinne in our present injunccyon, but woll notyfy to yowr prioresse. Nor have no loking nor spectacles owteward thorght the wiche ye mythe falle in worldly dilectacyone.”

“ That noone of yow speke ne comone with no seculere persone, withoute lycence of the prioresse. And that there be another of yowre sustres present assigned by the prioresse, to here and recorde the honeste of both partyes in such commynication. And such letters or gestes sent or receyed may turn into honeste and wurchepe, and none into velanye ne disclaundered of yowre honeste and religion.”

The prioress stated, in explanation of these articles, that in former times great excesses had taken place even within those walls. Improper communications had been exchanged through the grating of the crypt, during the performance of mass; and this had made it necessary that further powers should be given to the superior, as well to maintain the reputation of the convent, as to preserve from Satan the souls of its inmates.

She expressed an apprehension that Mariana would consider the restrictions which the nuns were compelled to observe, too rigid. Mariana assured her, that it would be her care not to transgress them. It was her sincere desire to comply in all things with the will of her uncle. It would have given her satisfaction had he come to a different decision; but assured that what he had done was dictated by the most ardent affection, she felt, though she could not repress melan-

choly, that to be in any respect disobedient or refractory would be ungrateful.

The prioress applauded the piety of this resolution. She was confident that it would be found to have been inspired by wisdom ; and she assured Mariana, that those restraints, of which in the first instance it was natural for her to stand much in awe, would eventually be found so light as not to be felt in any respect irksome.

The prioress was anxious to prove that the words of kindness addressed to Mariana, on her entrance into the convent, were not uttered as a matter of course, by endeavouring to do what might comfort and pleasure her on every occasion. This conduct compelled her in answer to a letter which she received through the superior from Ferdinand, to state that she had experienced the kindest attention on every occasion ; but at the same time she scrupled not to add, that her objections to the life of a nun remained un-

shaken. She entreated him yet to consider, if she might not be released from the necessity of taking the veil, and declared herself not without hope that he would see reason to revoke his decision.

Ferdinand promptly replied. He rejoiced that she was satisfied with the conduct of the prioress and her sister nuns, but thought, however unwelcome the assurance, that it was kindness once for all to state, that she must look for no change in her situation. "I do thank you," he concluded, "for your letter. It hath done merveilles to set my heart at ease, and now, sithence you be thus happily settled, where no engulphing storm can assail, God his name be thanked, I have but little to do on earth, which little shall be soon and easily accomplished. Wherefore I pray ye, Mariana, forget the world and forget me. Past one other lettre after this present you shall not receive, soe I believe and desire. Repine

not, weep not at this ; for trust me, it will grieve thy gentle spirit to hear of me ; but still more to hear from me again."

Mariana received the letter with hope, but she closed it in despair. There was that in its termination which recalled the terrific confusion into which she had been formerly thrown, by the language of Ferdinand. When she read what he had now written, and recalled his former words and manner, she suspected that he meditated self-destruction. The horror which this idea inspired, she in vain strove to repel. It heightened her former melancholy ; and tears, as often as it recurred to her and it never was long absent, fell from her eyes in torrents, which she strove in vain to hide.

- The prioress failed not to remark that Mariana, before sad, was now disconsolate. She endeavoured to soothe her, but the maternal love which at first, in some degree, mitigated her sorrow, could not

reach the present source of her grief. The superior imputed her affliction to the peremptory manner in which the suit of Mariana to be withdrawn from a religious life had been rejected.

“ You weep, daughter,” said she, “ and trust ~~me~~ your tears affect me. It is my office to reprove them ; but I know how keen the pang which nature, rebelling against devotion, inflicts on the young and susceptible mind.”

“ Indeed my holy mother —”

“ Nay, Mariana, dissemble not with me, it would be useless, and fear no harshness from my lips ; you are now as one who has received the veil, so I consider you, for your uncle has written to request that this may take place with all speed, and as privately as possible. Therefore, henceforth regard me as your mother, or, if that would bring me nearer to you, as a sister, to whose love you may reveal the inmost workings of your heart, without dread of exposure,

and with prospect of solace greater than, when you first came here, it would have been safe in me to encourage you to expect."

" Alas !" Mariana sighed, " I know not how to make return for kindness so unlooked for ; I have sorrows springing perhaps from phantoms of the mind, which I dare not trust to expression."

" I can easily guess the state of your feelings, but fear not me."

" I cannot give utterance to my thoughts, nor can I render up myself entirely to the performance of those duties, which it should now be my joy to fulfil. I feel that I am unworthy of the asylum I have found — of the indulgence which I have known ; for while my whole soul should ascend to its Creator, my mind is as it were chained to the earth, and my lips repeat without consciousness or meaning, those prayers which ought only to be pronounced with the liveliest emotions of piety."

“ Heaven does not require impossibilities of its creatures. The youthful being, suddenly snatched from the world, cannot at once forget the brightly-varied scenes which she has beheld; nor can she, while they are fondly remembered, at once discard ~~all~~ wish to revisit them, or to indulge in those associations which they recal.”

“ Your kindness frames an apology for my weakness, which I should have feared to pronounce for myself.”

“ Let this be regarded as a cheering omen, that as now in words I go further in your favour than your own speech could venture, I may hereafter indulge in something beyond words.”

“ You are good, but goodness cannot perform impossibilities. No indulgence can eradicate the cureless grief which inhabits my disturbed bosom.”

“ I think, my young sister, I can guess at the situation of your heart. I know the agonising tortures which thrill the



bosom of the maiden devoted to heaven, but fondly attached to the world. I have felt and can commiserate those emotions, which the deity seems to inspire (so the votary of love feels), but which duty to that deity commands us to subdue (so holy fathers teach); you will therefore not be dealt with harshly by me."

Mariana again expressed her acknowledgments for present kindness and promised indulgence.

"But," said the prioress, "there is something in your countenance which tells me, that while you express and desire to manifest gratitude, you feel despair. Be comforted: often in the blackest night, a bright star unexpectedly pours his glistening glory on the eye; and so perhaps, dreary as all within these walls may appear, unlooked-for happiness will yet gladden its pensive inmate."

Mariana was affected by the tender warmth of the superior, and abstained from speaking, that she might not give

new pain, by declaring how impossible it was, with the griefs and apprehensions which then oppressed her, for her mind to receive the comfort which the prioress desired to impart.

## CHAP. XVI.

Sir, quod I, and where is she now ?  
Now, quod he, and ystinte anone,  
Therwith he wox as dedde as a stone,  
And saied, Alas ! that I was bore !

CHAUCER.

“ IT is a goodly sight to see a young man diligent. Such sight refreshes my eyes ; but it may be meet to remember *est modus in rebus*, and truly I must remark your industry passes that line which, in my judgment, prudence requires should be observed.”

Such were the words of Lord Erpingham, addressed to Ferdinand, when, after weeks of toil, his lordship found his secretary occupied with labours which he had never required him to take upon himself.

“ Your lordship is kindly considerate ; but it has escaped your recollection, that

the industry which fatigues the body is often found the best means of giving the mind repose."

"Leave you these cares for a season. The day is passing fair; and as you may find pleasure in viewing the country, a horse is ready saddled, on which you can forth immediately. This will perhaps relieve your spirits, and improve your health, which of late is, so it strikes me, somewhat impaired."

"Of such improvement I have no need. I covet not the proffered indulgence, and cannot enjoy the recreation you would fain afford."

"Nevertheless it is my desire that the experiment shall be tried. Change of scene will sometimes work wonders on the youthful mind; and it would not a little please me, if it might bring to you that lightness of heart which does not ill become your age. So take your course; and that you may think nothing

of charges, disburse the contents of this purse for me."

Ferdinand received the offered purse, at the same time demanding,

"In what way am I to expend this gold? For whom is your bounty intended?"

"To your first question, Ferdinand, I reply, even as you like: — to the second, I must say, talk not of bounty, but consider it an inadequate acknowledgment for the unwearied zeal by which you have distinguished yourself since you first came beneath this roof."

Ferdinand started with unfeigned surprise at finding the present, which was of no mean value, intended for him.

"I pray you take it back, my lord," — he faltered; "I have no use for it — I have not — I — I cannot deserve it from *you*, as others may."

"Let your modesty be dumb for this time. Name it not — nay, nay," con-

tinued his lordship, repelling Ferdinand, who endeavoured to return the purse to his hand, "this is too much. If you mean not to offend me by a mark of your contempt, give over resistance."

Ferdinand was irresolute how to act. A deep blush invaded his countenance. Yielding to the kindness of his patron, he said, bowing while he spoke,

"That I may not offend, I will hold it for your lordship."

Lord Erpingham pressed on him the propriety of indulging in the exercise which he had recommended, and with such effect, that Ferdinand ceased to resist, and descending to the yard, he mounted the horse prepared for him, and passed out behind the house into Jackanapes-lane, which then led eastward from Fickett's fields into Chancery-lane.

But Ferdinand had no desire to view the country. He gazed with the most perfect indifference on scenes which, had his frame of mind been different, might

have charmed by their beauty, or surprised by their novelty. Without any particular object in view, he first rode in the direction of Hampstead, and then with listless disregard, suffering his horse to choose the road, he went eastward. He took little notice of the parts to which he wandered, till he found himself in Finsbury-fields. It was by this time afternoon, and having done enough to satisfy himself that exercise could not benefit him, he traversed the extensive plot of waste and swampy ground on which Finsbury-square, and the streets north and south of it, have been erected, and returned by Moorgate to the city.

He had reached St. Paul's, when he observed a funeral procession enter the cathedral. Ferdinand felt desirous of witnessing a ceremony, likely, from its solemnity, to be congenial with those feelings of melancholy which had possession of his heart. He accordingly passed within the church-yard of Pardon Haw,

which stood on the north side of the cathedral, dismounted, and followed the corpse.

There was then a public way through the body of the church, which was very much frequented in the latter part of the day. Those who repaired thither did so, not from feelings of devotion, but to walk and lounge, to talk of politics and business, and plan the pleasures of the night. The pressure was commonly so great in "the walks of Paul's," that but few females ventured there, such excepted whose object it was to entertain the dissipated of the other sex. Here those who ventured to criticise the measures of the government, a body greatly inferior in numbers to those who in that way now occupy themselves, failed not to repair to catch the current reports of the day. Here was seen the trader to meet his mercantile friends; and here came the dandy of the sixteenth century to exhibit to the admiration, envy, or merriment



of the crowd the newest fashions. The entrances and various parts of the walls were covered with numerous placards, describing the wants and wishes of those by whom they were placed there, the commodities they had to sell, or the feats they were competent to perform. That they disfigured a splendid edifice, might have been objected to them by those who deserved not censure for being over-fastidious ; but this was not regarded, and to say the truth, merited not to be regarded as of moment, when set against the important accommodation offered to all classes of the community by this sort of general *advertiser*. The Royal Exchange had not then been erected, theatrical saloons had not been imagined, the diurnal press had not been called into existence ; and it will therefore excite little surprise that this, or that any place in London, should have been generally in the crowded state, which caused the walks of Paul's to be called " the land's epitome," or " the

lesser ile of Great Britaine," which so oddly combined the attractions of an exchange, a playhouse, and a daily newspaper.

Ferdinand penetrated into the midst of the multitude without intending to do so, and the procession which he intended to follow had passed and was no longer within view. After a short delay, he found his way to the choir. The mourners were not there, and he was retiring, when a chorister of the cathedral, sustained by a verger, detained him by demanding money.

The peremptory tone in which this demand was made ill accorded with the sacred character of the place, and Ferdinand felt his indignation moved by the manner in which he had been accosted.

"What mean you, sir," he enquired, "that you thus rudely claim money of me for entering a place of worship, which of right is open to all."

"Speech is thriftless, my master, here," replied the chorister: "methought even

one of the common sort, such as you may be peradventure, could hardly remain so clownish as not to know that coming here in such guise as you come, he must pay *spur money*."

" My spurs," said Ferdinand, " are no accommodation to myself at this present ; but I see not what incommmodity they can bring to you, that you should feel emboldened so coarsely to extort pay."

" Perhaps you deem that you have shown much forbearance in *only* bringing your spurs, and looked for gratitude from us of the church, forasmuch as you have spared us as yet the company of your horse."

" I say not that ; but this I shall adventure to hint, that, but for your surplice, I should so have requited your flouts, that you should, ere this, have felt you owed me no thanks for coming without my whip."

While he spoke, a motion of his arm

displayed the instrument of which he had spoken to such advantage, that the chorister fell back a step or two, as if he anticipated its immediate application to his shoulders. The words of Ferdinand served to dissipate this idea, and backed by several of his fellows, he returned to the attack with increased courage.

“Your flourish, friend,” he said, “will not avail to save your pence. If you part not with some of your coin, we shall be in no haste to part with you. Those only refuse to satisfy the ancient demand for *spur money*, who, being masterless men or houseless vagrant knaves, desire to get a lodging for the night in the oratory, which shall be yours if you scruple more. So pay your coin strait, or the door shall be made fast.”

The door by which Ferdinand had entered was already bolted. One of the choristers was hastening towards a second door, which was opened as if to secure

it, when another entered in haste, and called out to his fellows,

“ Speed ye—speed ye to the grave.”

The desire of witnessing the obsequies about to be performed operated more powerfully on Ferdinand than the threats which had been uttered ; and as he now saw judged that by satisfying their cupidity his wish might be gratified, he gave a *tester* (a shilling was then so named), being the first piece on which he chanced, to the choristers, who instantly ran with disorderly laughter out of the choir, towards the place where they were to assist in the solemn rites appointed for the burial of the dead.

Disgusted not less by their indecorous levity than by their rudeness and rapacity, he followed their steps, wondering at the carelessness with which human beings from habit are brought to view the most affecting solemnities. He passed the Gothic shrine of *Saint Erkenwald*, then a splendid object, for the hands of re-

forming puritans had not despoiled it of the silver, gold, and jewels with which credulous piety had enriched it, to prevail on the saint, for rewards so munificent, to intercede for the liberal donors in heaven, as well as to cure divers maladies which afflicted the faithful on earth. He had little time to examine the monuments of the Saxon kings *Sebba* and *Ethelred*, and he passed in the same hurried manner the tombs of *Henricus de Hengham*, *Eustatius Falconberg*, *Harry de Lacie* Earl of Lincoln, *Bishop Niger*, *Sir Simon de Burley*, *Bishop Kempe*, *Sir John de Beauchamp*, and *John of Gaunt*. He halted for a moment to admire the singular beauty of the final resting-place of *Thomas de Eure*. The admirable brass effigies of himself, and the angels and saints placed about his tomb, made it hardly less striking to the beholder than the shrine of the saint. His pause was short, for he was now near the grave, and perceived that the service, which was

different from that now in use, had begun. The body had been lowered into the narrow cell prepared for its reception, and Ferdinand saw the priest take a small spade which was handed to him, and drop earth on the coffin, so as to form a line from the head to the feet. He then threw mould over the bosom of the dead man, in a transverse direction, to form the sign of the cross. This part of the ceremony completed, the shovel was given to an attendant, and a chalice with a small brush in it was handed to the officiating ecclesiastic, who sprinkled with holy water from the chalice the cross which had been described. A pause ensued, and more earth was thrown in by the grave-digger, so as completely to hide the coffin from view. The choristers, who had sung when they first reached the grave, now chaunted the *antiphon*. Ferdinand listened to the affecting strain with interest, but with astonishment, while

he reflected that the sublime harmonies which moved his wonder proceeded from those who had so lately been engaged in a rude and insolent struggle for a trifling donation.

The priest then apostrophising the departed, exclaimed, "I commend thy immortal spirit to God, the all-omnipotent, through the merits of his Christ—earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust." The last words were unaccompanied by the ceremony connected with them in the modern funeral service, and the mourners retired.

Ferdinand was about to leave the church, when his attention was arrested by the spear, shield, and cap of *John of Gaunt*.

The same taste which placed the garment worn by Edward the Black Prince over his remains at Canterbury, had deposited these relics of his brother in the metropolitan cathedral. Examining them with that minute observation which ob-



jects, once the property of some distinguished mortal who flourished in a generation long since passed away, are calculated to invite, he perceived by a neighbouring tomb a man reclining with a melancholy air. His eyes were fixed on the statue of a beautiful woman. The elegance of the figure, and the sweet expression of the countenance, as seen through the dusky gloom which the coming evening had thrown on every object, commanded involuntary admiration. Ferdinand could not but acknowledge the exquisite skill of the sculptor, who, while giving her an air of cheerful resignation as she prepared to obey the summons of two beckoning cherubim, had mingled with it an expression of commiseration for one below, who was seen struggling in frantic despair, to detain her on earth. His attention rested alternately on the tomb and on the individual near it, by whom he suddenly

found himself recognised. It was Lord Erpingham.

"I thought not of meeting with you," said his lordship "in this lonely aisle. Rather should I have expected to find you in the thronged walks; for though you seek not dissipated pleasures, there, methinks, you would look on a more agreeable variety than can amuse in this silent receptacle of death."

"Your lordship, it should seem, judged differently for yourself, or you would not have been here to remark on my singularity of taste."

"Interesting associations and affecting recollections bring me here, which cannot exist for you."

"But, my lord, there is enough of interest ever resident with the tombs of departed worth, to give a place of sepulchre no small attraction."

"That there is much to interest cannot be denied. How thrilling the reflection suggested when we recal what

the dust on which we stand has been, or when the open grave presents us with the mouldering clods, which were the mighty men of other days."

"Or with the wasted relic, once the monarch's hand, which proud ambition but aspired to kiss."

"But perhaps still more touching the contrast," said Lord Erpingham, "when we remember that here too all the potent, the once resistless artillery of love is deposited. Here sleeps, in cold forgetfulness, the eye which could dazzle with its radiance. The ruby lip, that woke the admiring lover to rapture, crumbles unregarded, and the gay tresses which sported in wanton luxuriance over a brow of alabaster, lie dishevelled and dishonoured. Here, side by side, reduced to the same level, rests the fair one who flourished in unsided, undecorated beauty, and she who wooed all the arts to which folly can resort to conceal its absence."

"I need not ask to which of these

classes she belonged, at whose tomb I saw your tears fall."

"True, Ferdinand, for though the sculptor could but faintly indicate the living grace, the mild intelligence, the beaming love, which belonged to the dear original, enough of her departing brightness is imaged by his chisel, to distinguish her from those who vex their lives with vain studies to adorn themselves, and who to seem lovely, wear colours, not their own, in odious mockery of the roseate glow which mantles on the damask cheek of youth, blooming in happy innocence."

"Indeed, my lord, she seems to have been no common beauty."

"She was,—but oh why, why should I recal it! a model of perfection. I speak not merely of her form and face, but of her mind. I wish to bow with submissive reverence to the inscrutable decrees of Providence, yet can I not choose but marvel

while I mourn, that one so fitted to grace this earth should have been recalled so soon."

His voice faltered, and he slightly stumbled. Ferdinand offered to support him, and doing so he perceived the strongest emotion expressed in the countenance of his patron.

"Thy kind aid I need not," said Lord Erpingham, endeavouring to resume his wonted calmness. "I feel better."

"A burning tear has fallen on my hand. It came from you, my lord."

"It is not the first by millions that I have shed on this spot."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Ferdinand.

"This seems to cause you measureless astonishment."

"It does, my lord, to mark a love so fervent and so constant—in *you*."

"Because you see me a lonely isolated being now, it fills you with amazement to learn that I was ever otherwise."

"I certainly did consider your lord-

ship too prudent to enthrall yourself with those ties which, though some have deemed them sweet, often bring much sorrow."

" True ; but the kindred bond is still so rich in exalted joy, that all else on earth is mean compared with it. This, giddy unreflecting youth can ill comprehend. It is when the wane of life approaches, — when experience has taught the observer to comprehend the intrinsic worthlessness of common pleasure, the vanity of praise, the hollowness of profession, that he understands the solace of being enabled to retreat to a sweetly peopled guileless little world, where he may reign in undisputed sovereignty, as father and as lord."

" Feeling thus, I should have expected that you would not have been as you now are."

" It is because I feel thus that I am what you see me. Prematurely robbed of all I most prized on earth, I mourned

too much for lost happiness, to be capable of beginning the world again."

" But you feel too acutely. Ought you not rather to exult in the hope that the beauty here imaged in monumental marble awaits your coming in a better world."

" So I trust."

" How vast were the difference, if instead of being able to cherish such belief, it were yours to know that instead of hastening to meet the smiling object of happy love, you must soon be confronted by the bleeding spectre of one betrayed — betrayed to shame and murder. You start, my lord."

" The awful idea you have suggested might make any mortal start with horror. It is sad for a sufferer to feel himself a

" Wretche that dethe hath made al naked,  
Of all the bliss that 'er was maked,"

as our great poet has described that same John of Gaunt, near whose grave we

stand, to have been; but if to agonizing regret conscious guilt were added, I should think the load of woe too great for mortal man to bear."

"I once supposed so too, but I know the contrary."

"Do you *know* the contrary?"

"At least, my attention has been directed to one who is a living proof that your supposition is unfounded."

"Can it be possible! Is he in England?"

"He is."

"Is he known to me?"

"Your lordship has been where he was to be found."

"His name?"

"It were useless to mention it."

"I grieve that such a wretch should exist."

"And so do I—but the doors of the cathedral are now being closed. We must retire. Come, shake off this show of sadness. There is much cause for



grief when we lose those to whom we are fondly attached ; yet you must feel that he is comparatively happy who knows this to be the result of calamity, and not the consequence of heartless damning crime."

## CHAP. XVII.

The wanton nunnes likewise dallying with them in the darke, brought forth the fruits of darknesse, as was found in finding many infants' bones in many of their cells.

SPEED.

**T**HOUGH caution was as necessary as it could have been at any time on the part of Bray, when communicating with Edmund, yet as the latter was no longer likely to attract notice by any sudden exclamation of surprise, opportunities for exchanging their ideas occurred which had not before offered. These were of short duration, but they sufficed to enable the jester to explain the prudential considerations which had prevented him from returning on the preceding morning, after the abbot had been unexpectedly encountered, and to announce that on the following night, as it would be his turn.

to perform the ceremony of going round to the cells, to ascertain that all were in, he would visit Edmund, if the corridor should be clear, when they could converse more at leisure.

Edmund had contemplated death, not only without pain, but with feelings of satisfaction and consolation, while he believed that it approached but in the society of devotion and love. He did so no longer when he suspected that he might perish the victim of base assassination. He began to enquire if he had no motive for living—if it became not a duty to defeat the villain who aimed at his life? and he had nearly carried this in the affirmative, on considering the question merely as it affected himself, but when he remembered the wrongs—the cruel injuries which the ill-fated Clifford had sustained, doubt was no more, and he felt that it was his duty to preserve his own existence, in order, if possible, to vindicate another's fame. Clifford, it was

too probable, had left England in despair, and was now far beyond the reach of reparation, but his name might be snatched from obloquy, and his destroyer brought to justice.

Reflections like these made him not a little anxious for the arrival of the hour when he calculated on receiving a visit from the jester. Nicholas came. He called on Edmund by his name, and received the usual answer, while the door was silently opened for his reception. Bray waived his hand, and declined entering. He vanished, Edmund heard his steps at a distance, and believed that he was prevented from fulfilling his promise. The sounds died away, and the next moment Bray appeared. Having walked some distance from the cell, he returned barefooted that his approach might not be remarked.

“ Well, Master Edmund,” said he, “ the door being closed, you had little opportunity of watching the motions of

the worthy abbot before he surprised you."

"I certainly had but few moments for observation. These, however, sufficiently unfolded his character. They proved that he was different from what I had supposed him to be; and that point settled, I can easily believe that he has sustained no wrong from your description."

"It now only remains for you to decide what course you will take."

"On that subject I have no right to pause. I hold it to be my duty to expose the hypocrite without delay."

"How will you attempt this?"

"My first step shall be to acquaint Lord Erpingham with what I know?"

"But by what means will you do this?"

The jester smiled while he put this question. Edmund thought he was trifling with him by asking it.

"Surely," said he, "you are jesting."

when you make such enquiry. In speaking with Lord Erpingham, I shall avail myself of the same organ which has hitherto served me, however indifferently, for the purposes of conversation."

"It is a sore calamity that when a man has once gained the name of a fool, or a wit, or any thing of the kind, he cannot easily obtain attention when he speaks the language of sober thoughtfulness. Your tongue, I doubt not, has heretofore served you in very good stead; but I hope you will not suspect me of wishing to resume my abdicated functions, nor yet of meaning to treat your mode of discourse with the slightest disrespect, when I hint that you will find it somewhat difficult, standing here at Bishopsgate, to make yourself well understood by Lord Erpingham at Temple-bar."

"Nay, this is idle."

"Why so?"

"Because Egbert has repeatedly of-

ferred to permit me to visit Lord Erpingham. He has even pressed me to go ; and though by the rules of the order one of the fraternity must be my companion, that cannot prevent me from disclosing what I wish to reveal."

" Heretofore, while he had no suspicion of you, it would have been an easy matter to gain licence to visit Fickett's-fields. It will not be so now."

" How know you that ?"

" Because I know the man of whom we speak. Though you disguised your object in watching him and his brothers in jollity with some address, depend upon it you have not so far succeeded but he at least suspects you. If you pass from this place, it must be by stealth."

" I think you magnify the difficulty. After pressing me on many occasions to see Lord Erpingham, when I shall say that feeling indisposed, I will avail myself of his kindness by leaving the monastery.

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for a few hours, still in all things conforming to its rules, what can he offer in opposition to my wish?"

"In argument nothing, but in bar to the execution of your design, sundry bolts and locks, which will defeat all your projects more effectually than the most cogent reasoning that ever fell from the lips of man."

"Do you think then, that he will venture to throw off the mask?"

"Believing that he will consider the danger great, there is nothing which desperation can suggest which he will not oppose to your purpose."

"He dare not proceed to extremities. Dread of Lord Erpingham, who will not fail to seek me —"

"You forget that your zeal has forbidden Lord Erpingham to come."

"At least he will enquire —"

"And will receive a lying answer. He will be told that your austere piety denies approach to all the world. He



will next hear of your sickness, but be admonished that he must not intrude upon your solitude. At length he shall be informed of your disease, and then—then he may be permitted to gaze on your remains, when there shall be no danger of your tongue revealing aught that could be prejudicial to his interest, or derogatory to his character.”

“What then would you advise?” said Edmund.

“To escape,” replied the jester.

“But that is not in my power.”

“With my assistance, I trust it may be effected. I have found a key which opens the door of the sepulchral vault, in which the flagellation was performed on the carcase of Brother Richard. Thence a series of passages extend, but to what precise point I have not yet ascertained. This however I know, that they lead beyond the walls of the monastery, and the fastenings are within. If we can gain these unobserved, you may

go forth. I will remain to adjust matters, so that your flight shall not be too soon discovered, and the means by which you obtain your emancipation cannot be known."

"Why will you remain behind?"

"That my testimony, when required, may be less suspected. A charge made by two runaway monks would be viewed with suspicion, and the oath of Nick Bray would be laughed at. But when I support your accusation, not having transgressed the rules of the order myself, my very character will make against the wretch who brought me hither."

Edmund was grateful for the zeal which the jester manifested, but still argued that he could pass from the monastery with more ease and safety by application to Egbert, who would not, he was convinced, refuse him the permission he proposed to solicit. Bray insisted that the application would only confirm

the misgivings of the abbot ; but, as Edmund thought little would be risked in making the experiment, it was finally resolved that this should be done on the following day. At night, in the event of failure, if no unexpected difficulty opposed the execution of such a design, Edmund consented to attempt leaving the monastery by the way which his companion had recommended.

They parted, and Edmund impatiently awaited the return of day. The objects to which his attention was now directed, had in some degree withdrawn his mind from that debilitating grief under which he had languished, and though during the last two nights he had slept but little, he found himself in an improved state of health. On this he was most cordially congratulated by the abbot with an air of sincerity which, added to the almost unearthly piety of his manner, while joining in devotional exercises, made Edmund ask himself whether what he had heard

could be true, whether what he had seen might not admit of explanation.

What he purposed saying to Father Egbert, Edmund thought would put him to the test. He named what he wished, and felt convinced that Bray was mistaken unless he had wished to deceive, when the abbot with all his accustomed benevolence of manner intimated assent.

He doubted whether to avail himself of the licence thus accorded or not. To act on the mere assertions of one who had been a jester would be rash, and though he had witnessed what he viewed as a scene of disgraceful revelry, there was a possibility that the brothers whom he had supposed to be engaged in carousing were differently occupied. There might be rites to which one so young could not be admitted, and the vessels used in them, it was just possible, would pass on a slight glance for the common ministers of drunkenness.

These considerations opposed the con-

viction of the abbot's profligacy. But he had soon reason to believe that he had not erred in thinking the worst of Egbert. Having given assent to his request to leave the house, the abbot soon applied himself with all the artifice he could use to dissuade Edmund from seeking Lord Erpingham. He pressed on his consideration the inconsistency which would be imputed, if he thus early departed from the resolution he had announced, and for himself he confessed that he lamented to find the firmness of Edmund already shaken. He said he had feared that it would be so, and therefore it was that he had so repeatedly called upon him to give the subject his serious consideration, before he made that vow which he had now pronounced, and which could not be recalled.

To this Edmund replied by urging what the holy father himself had said in favour of occasionally going forth on former occasions. But Egbert found a vast

difference between the present case and that of an ordinary monk, who had not so repeatedly and so decisively resolved on rending asunder the last link which connected him with the rest of the world.

All that he said served to prove that Bray had spoken but the truth. Edmund did not relax in his suit, nor express any intention of not acting on the permission to leave the house, which had been granted. Egbert renewed his arguments, but the ear to which they were addressed was closed against his eloquence, and he found it necessary to abandon the attempt. In doing this, he took occasion to confess that he had seldom met with one so difficult to convince—that the change in Edmund's wishes was remarkably sudden, and he finished by observing, that as another change might follow as quickly, he would at least secure the applicant time to reflect before he risked any part of the high character for piety which he had already obtained.

He desired it therefore to be understood, that the consent he had given to his leaving the monastery, must not be acted upon till the following day.

This conduct satisfied Edmund, that all that had been stated to the prejudice of the abbot was correct. In the benign smile which sat on his features, while he seemed to impose a kind restriction, Edmund recognised the most detestable hypocrisy, and it was followed by what he considered a malignant glare, which embodied the rage of a demon. He was persuaded that it was the object of Egbert, if possible, to prevail on him to give up the determination to which he had come ; but failing in his efforts to do this, Edmund no longer doubted that force would be used to prevent the accomplishment of his purpose.

His mind was fully made up to extricate himself by the way which the jester had pointed out. That such was his intention, he found an opportunity of

stating in the course of the day, and Bray promised to repair to him at the proper time.

Edmund anxiously waited for his approach, when the hour arrived which he thought best fitted for the accomplishment of their design. Midnight had sounded, and another of the fraternity had been round to the cells to call on their respective inmates. A new apprehension came stealing over Edmund's bosom. Might not this failure be justly imputed to negligence or treachery? If to the former, a guide so careless was little to be trusted; if to the latter, it was impossible for him to escape. Bray had been considered a careless mischievous character. That he did not scruple to wound another's feelings merely for sport, he had seen in his conduct towards the unfortunate Clifford. The chimes announced the hour of two, while his mind was thus engaged. He sadly listened, and hope seemed to expire as the



sound died on his ear. "I am duped, or he is detected," he sighed, as he threw himself on his mattress. He perceived that the lamp was expiring, but he considered he had no further occasion for light, and cared not to stretch forth his hand to trim it. Disappointment produced a listless drowsiness, and sleep closed his eyes. He suddenly woke, and thought he heard the signal of Bray. It was repeated, the door opened, and Bray entered.

"Master Edmund, are you here?" he enquired.

Edmund answered, by expressing surprise, that he had not come sooner.

"I have been on the watch since midnight," said the jester, "but till now, we could not venture forth with safety. Some of the monks have been moving in the very direction in which we are to go. But come, be quick."

"Since it is so late, will it be wise to make the attempt now?"

“ I think so. It will certainly subject you to some inconvenience which might be avoided ; but inconvenience is not to be regarded, where life is at stake.”

“ Undoubtedly not ; but to what do you particularly refer ?”

“ Why I am fearful it will be too late for you to pass to Lord Erpingham’s this morning, without risk of being followed and secured before you can explain your conduct.”

“ Indeed !”

“ If we encounter any difficulty in making our way, as it is now past three o’clock, it will be perhaps almost five when you get outside the walls. What I would advise then, should be this, that you pass down the lane leading from Bishopsgate Street, just by *the White Hart*, whence Wolsey once took his departure in state for Canterbury. Go straight by the wall, but turn to the right, before you get to Limping Saint Giles’s.”

"I do not know the place you mention."

"No!" cried Bray, with an air of ineffable surprise. "Only to think now in what ignorance you better sort of people are brought up! Why, *Limping Saint Giles's* is the knick name for *Cripplegate*, as *Redriff* is for *Rotherhithe*. You need not go so far by half a mile. Turn down the lane I have mentioned, pass the Tumbledown Hospital of St. Mary of Bethlem, which stands,—no, which falls therein, and then take your way to the right just before you reach Wall Brook. Do this, and you will ere long come to the *Dog-house* at Finsbury, where my friend the *Common Hunt*, that is the name of the office given to Dick Longthong, is to be found. Devoted to the instruction of the rising generation, it is his business to feed and educate my Lord Mayor's hounds, and a short time ago let me tell you, he had some very promising puppies, which did their preceptor great credit.

The garrulity of the jester was now running away with him, and Edmund thought it necessary to remark that they had no time for conversation on such matters.

"That is true my master ; well then, Dick is my friend, and, though he is now a great man, will pay you some attention if you mention Nick Bray. There, in any case, you can remain through the day, and after nightfall it will not be difficult for you to pass unobserved to Fiskett's fields."

The lamp had expired, and they were now in total darkness.

"Follow me," said Bray.

"Can you find the way without a light," Edmund enquired.

"Not very well," the other replied ; "but I can borrow a light from the withdrawing room next the refectory."

"May not some one be there?"

"Should such be the case, there is an end of our journeying ; for through that room we must pass. But come ; we must advance cautiously.

They passed along the corridor without speaking. He carefully opened the door of the apartment which had been named. It was deserted apparently for the night, and Bray took the only lamp by which it was illuminated. He entered the passage through which they had moved on the night of the Monk's funeral ; and, descending as before, they soon saw the door of the vault.

“ Now, master Edmund, take the lamp, while I apply my key to the lock. I hope the wards are not so rusty as they were some months ago, when all my strength would not suffice to get the key round. We are fortunate,” he exclaimed on a sudden ; “ by marvellous good luck the door is unlocked to our hands.”

He pushed the door open, and a violent gust of wind extinguished the lamp.

“ Truly,” said the jester, “ this is a sore calamity. I like not the paths of darkness just now. To get another lamp I fear is impossible, and without one I am much afraid of some miscarriage.”

“ I think I saw a flash of light on the opposite side.”

“ And so did I. Lord how forgetful I am ! It came from the candles, which are constantly burning in the little crypt at the shrine of *our lady*. I shall make so free as to borrow one.”

He then advanced into the vault, closely followed by Edmund. A flash of light was again seen, and Bray, turning round, sought to retrace his steps with the utmost precipitation.

“ There is some one here beside ourselves,” he whispered. “ Follow me.”

Edmund attempted to do so, but missed the door. He heard the jester’s whisper, “ This way,” but he had not been able to follow when a strong glare of light was thrown on the wall. The door was now sufficiently visible, but he could not reach it without being seen by the bearer of the lanthorn ; and aware of this, he on the instant shrunk behind a pillar which had impeded his retreat.

“ Did you see nothing move ?” en-

quired the holder of the light, who was no other than the abbot.

"Nothing," replied a female voice, "but the shadows of the pillars, as you changed the situation of the lamp."

"The grave is ready," said he; "and I hope the child will yet be born, and entombed before day-light."

Edmund was thrilled with amazement and horror at what he heard. That moment he perceived the advancing lamp had thrown his shadow on the wall full in the view of Egbert and his companion. He strove to conceal himself behind the pillar; but the abbot and his companion had marked the gliding image, and the former impetuously rushing forward, demanded,

"Who is he that seeks concealment here?"

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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